

THE OLD
BACHELOUR.

Q. 12. 6. 26
3

A
COMEDY.

Written by Mr. Congreve.

*Quem tulit ad Scenam ventoso gloria Curru,
Exanimat lentus Spectator; sedulus inflat.
sic leve, sic parvum est, animum quod laudis
avarum*

subruit, aut reficit.

Horat. Epist. I. Lib. II.



LONDON,
Printed in the Year 1710.

Tout Favour, not your Judgment, 'tis he fears:
Of all Loves begs you then to Rail, find fault:
For Plays, like Women, by the World are thought
(When you speak kindly of 'em) very naught.



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THE
BAPTIST

C. G. M. F. D. Y.

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T. O

Mr. CONGREVE.

When Vertue in pursuit of Fame appears,
And forward shoots the growth beyond
the Years,

We timely court the rising Hero's Cause;
And on his side, the Poet wisely draws;
Bespeaking him hereafter, by Applause. }

The days will come, when we shall all receive,
Returning Interest from what now we give:
Instructed, and supported by that praise,
And Reputation, which we strive to raise.

Nature so coy, so hardly to be woo'd
Lies, like a Mistress, but to be pursu'd.

CONGREVE! boldly follow on the
Chace;

He looks behind, and wants thy strong Em-
brace:

She yields, she yields surrenders all her Charms:
You but force her gently to your Arms.

Her Nerves, such graces, in your Lines
appear;

You were made to be her Ravisher.

RYDEN has long extended his Command,
Right divine, quite through the Muses
Land,

A 2

Abso-

Absolute Lord; and holding now from none,
But great Apollo, his undoubted Crown,
That Empire settled, and grown old in
Pow'r

Can wish for nothing, but a Successor:
Not to enlarge his Limits; but maintain
Those Provinces, which he alone could gain
His eldest Wicherly, in wise Retreat,
Thought it not worth his quiet to be great
Loose, wandering Etherege, in wild pleasures tost,

And foreign Int'rest, to his hopes long lost:
Poor Lee and Otway dead! CONGREVE
appears,

The Darling, and last Comfort of his Year
May'st thou live long in thy great Master's
smiles

And growing under him, adorn these Isles
But when—when part of him [be that
late]

His Body yielding must submit to Fate,
Leaving his deathless Works, and thee
hind,

The natural Successor of his Mind,
Then may'st thou finish what he has begun
Heir to his Merit, be in Fame his Son.
What thou hast done shews all is in
Power;

And to write better, only must write more
'Tis something to be willing to commend
But my best praise, is that I am
Friend,

THO. SOUTHERN

T O

Mr. CONGREVE.

THE Danger's great in these censo-
rious days,

When Criticks are so rife, to venture Praise:
When the infectious and ill-natur'd Brood
Behold, and damn the Work, because 'tis
good;

And with a proud, ungenerous Spight
would try

To pass an Ostracism on Poetry.

But you, my Friend, your Worth does
safely bear

Above their Spleen; you have no cause for
fear.

Like a well-mettled Hawk, you took your
Quite out of reach, and almost out of sight.

As the strong Sun, in a fair Summers day,
You rise, and drive the Mists and Clouds
away,

The Owls and Bats, and all the Birds of
Each line of yours, like polish'd Steel's so-
hard,

In Beauty safe, it wants no other guard.

Nature her self's beholden to your Dress,
Which tho still like, much fairer you ex-
press.

Some vainly striving Honour to obtain,
Leave to their Heirs the Traffick of their
Brain,

Like *China* under Ground, the ripening Wa-

In a long time, perhaps grows worth our
Care: [sown;

But you now reap the Fame, so well you've
The Planter tastes his Fruit to ripeness grown.
As a fair Orange-tree at once is seen,
Big with what's ripe, yet springing still with
green;

So at one time, my worthy Friend appears,
With all the sap of Youth, and weight
of Years.

Accept my pious Love, as forward Zeal,
Which tho' it ruins me I can't conceal:
Expos'd to Censure for my weak Applause,
I'm pleas'd to suffer in so just a Cause:
And tho, my Offering may unworthy prove
Take, as a Friend, the Wishes of my Love.

J. Marshall

T O
Mr. CONGREGVE,
On his PLAY called, the
OLD BATCHELOR.

WIt, like true Gold, refin'd from all Alloy,
Immortal is, and never can decay:
'Tis in all Times and Languages the same;
Nor can an ill Translation quench the Flame:
For, tho the Form and Fashion don't remain,
Th' intrinsic value still it will retain.

The

7
 Then let each studied Scene be writ with Art,
 And Judgment sweat to form the labour'd Part,
 Each Character be just, and Nature seem,
 Without th' Ingredient, Wit, 'tis all but Phlegm:
 For that's the Soul, which all the Mass must move,
 And wake our Passions into Grief, or Love.
 But you, too Bounteous, sow your Wit so thick,
 We are surpriz'd, and know not where to pick:
 And while our Clapping does you Justice do,
 Our selves we injure, and lose something new.
 What may'nt we then, great Youth, of thee presage,
 Whose Art and Wit so much transcend thy Age?
 How wilt thou shine at thy Meridian height,
 Who, at thy rising, giv'st so vast a Light?
 When DRYDEN dying, shall the World deceive,
 Whom we Immortal, at his Works, believe;
 Thou shalt succeed, the Glory of the Stage,
 Adorn and entertain the coming Age.

Bevil Higgins.

PROLOGUE,

*Intended for the old Batchelour, sent to
 the Author, by an unknown Hand.*

Most Authors on the Stage at first appear
 Like Widows-Bridegrooms, full of
 doubt and fear:

They Judge from the experience of the Dame,
 How hard a Task it is to quench her Flame:
 And who falls short of furnishing a course,
 Up to his brawny predecessors force,

A 4

With

With utmost rage from her embraces thrown,
Remains convicted, as an empty Drone.
Thus often, to his Shame, a pert Beginner
Proves in the end, a miserable Sinner.

As for our Youngster, I am ap to doubt
him :

With all the vigour of his Youth about him:
But he, more Sanguine, trusts in one and
twenty,

And impudently hopes he shall content ye.
For tho' his Batchelour be worn and cold;
He thinks the Young may club to help the Old:
And what alone can be atchiev'd by neither,
Is often brought about by both together.
The briskest of you all have felt Allarms,
Finding the fair One prostitute her Charms
With broken Sighs, in her old Fumblers
Arms.

But for our Spark, he Swears he'll ne're be
Jealous

Of any Rivals, but young lusty Fellows.
Falth let him try his Chance, and if the Slave
After his bragging prove a washy Knave;
May he be banish'd to some lonely Den,
And never more have leave to dip his Pen
But if he be the Champion he pretends,
Both Sexes sure will joyn to be his Friends;
For all agree, where all can have their ends.
And you must own him for a Man of Might
If he holds out to please you the third Night

PROLOGUE,

Spoken by Mrs. Bracegirdle.

How this vile World is chang'd ! In former days,
Prologues, were serious Speeches, before Plays;
Grave solemn things, as Graces are to Feasts;
Where, Poets begg'd a Blessing from their Guests.
But now, no more like Suppliants we come;
A Play makes War, and Prologue is the Drum:
Arm'd with keen Satyr, and with pointed Wit,
We threaten you who do for Judges sit,
To save our Plays, or else we'll damn your Pit.
But for your Comfort, it falls out to day,
We've a young Author and his first born Play;
So, standing only on his good Behaviour,
He's very civil, and entreats your Favour.
Not but the Man has Malice, would he show it,
But on my Conscience he's a bashful Poet;
You think that strange — no matter, he'll out grow it.
Well, I'm his Advocate — by me he prays you,
(I don't know whether I shall speak to please you)
He prays — O bless me ! what shall I do now?
Hang me if I know what he prays, or how!
And 'twas the prettiest Prologue as he wrote it!
Well, the Deuce take me, if I han't forgot it.
O Lord, for Heavens sake excuse the Play,
Because, you know, if it be damn'd to day,
I shall be hang'd for wanting what to say.
For my sake then — but I'm in such Confusion,
I cannot stay to hear your Resolution.

Runs off.

A S

PER.

PERSONÆ

DRAMATIS.

Men.

Heartwell, a surly old Batchelour, pretending to slight Women; secretly in Love with *Silvia*.

Bellmour, in Love with *Belinda*.

Vainlove, capricious in his Love; in Love with *Araminta*.

Sharper.

Sir Joseph Wittol.

Capt. Bluffe.

Fondlewife, a Banker.

Setter, a Pimp.

Servant to *Fondlewife*.

Women.

Araminta, in Love with *Vainlove*.

Belinda, her Cousin an affected Lady, in Love with *Bellmour*.

Latitia, Wife to *Fondlewife*.

Sylvia, *Vainlove*'s forsaken Mistress.

Lucy, her Maid.

Betty.

Footmen.

The Scene, *LONDON*.

THE



THE OLD BATCHELOUR.

A C T. I.

SCENE I. *The Street.*

Bellmour and Vainlove meeting.

Bellmour.

Vainlove, and abroad so early! good Morrow. I thought a Contemplative Lover could no more have parted with his Bed in a Morning, than a' could have slept in't.

Vain. Bellmour, good Morrow -- Why truth on't, these early Sallies are not usual to me; but Business as you see Sir -- (*Shewing Letters.* And Business must be follow'd, or be lost.

Bell. Pox o' Business -- And so must Time, my Friend, be close pursued, or lost. Business is the rub of Life, perverts our Aim, casts off the bias, and leaves us wide and short of the intended Mark.

Vain. Pleasure! I guess you mean.

Bell.

Bell. Ay, what else has meaning?

Vain. Oh the Wise will tell you —

Bell. More than they believe — or understand.

Vain. How, how, *Ned*, a wise Man say more than he understands?

Bell. Ay, ay, pox Wisdom's nothing but a pretending to know and believe more than we really do. You read of but one wise Man, and all that he knew was, that he knew nothing. Come, come, leave Business to Idlers, and Wisdom to Fools; they have need of 'em: Wit, be my Faculty, and Pleasure, my Occupation; and let Father Time shake his Glass. Let low and earthly Souls grovel till they have work'd themselves six foot deep into a Grave — Business is not my Element — I rowl in a higher Orb and dwell —

Vain. In Castles ith' Air of thy own building: That's thy Element, *Ned* — Well as high a Flyer as you are, I have a Lure may make you stoop.

[*Flings a Letter.*]

Bell. I marry Sir, I have a Hawks Eye at a Womans hand — There's more Elegancy in the false Spelling of this Supercription than in all *Cicerro* [*Takes up the Letter.*] Let me see — How now? Dear perfidious *Vainlove*.

[*Reads.*]

Vain. Hold, hold, 'slife that's the wrong.

Bell. Nay let's see the Name, *Silvia*! how can'st thou be ungrateful to that Creature? She's extreamly pretty and loves thee intirely — I have heard her breath such Raptures about thee —

Vain. Ay, or any Body that she's about —

Bell. No faith *Frank* you wrong her; she has been just to you.

Vain. That's pleasant, by my troth, from thee who hast enjoy'd her.

Bell. Never — her Affections: 'tis true by Heaven, she own'd to my Face; and blushing like the

Vain

Virgin Morn when it disclosed the Cheat, which,
that trusty Bawd of Nature, Night had hid, con-
fess'd her Soul was true to you; tho I by treachery
had stoll'n the Bliss —

Vain. So was true as Turtle — in imagination
Ned, ha? Preach this Doctrine to Husbands, and
the married Women will adore thee.

Bell. Why faith I think it will do well enough —
If the Husband be out of the way, for the Wife
to shew her Fondness and Impatience of his Ab-
sence, by choosing a Lover as like him as she can, and
what is unlike she may help out with her own
Fancy.

Vain. But is it not an Abuse to the Lover to be
made a Blind of? For she only stalks under him to
take aim at her Husband.

Bell. As you say the Abuse is to the Lover, not
the Husband: For 'tis an Argument of her great
Zeal towards him, that she will enjoy him in Effigie.

Vain. It must be a very superstitious Country,
where such Zeal passes for true Devotion. I doubt
it will be damn'd by all our Protestant Husbands
for flat Idolatry — But if you can make Alderman
Fondlewife of your Perswasion, this Letter will be
needless.

Bell. What, the old Banker with the handsome
Wife?

Vain. Ay.

Bell. Let me see, *Letitia*! Oh 'tis a delicious
Morsel. Dear *Frank* thou art the truest Friend in
the World.

Vain. Ay, am I not? To be continually starting
of Hares for you to course. We were certainly cut
out for one another; for my Temper quits an
Amour, just where thine takes it up — But read
that, it is an Appointment for me, this Evening;
when *Fondlewife* will be gone out of Town, to
meet

meet the Master of a Ship about the return of a Venture which he's in danger of losing. Read, read.

Bell. Reads. Hum, Hum — Out of Town this Evening, and talks of sending for Mr. Spintext to keep me company; but I'll take care, he shall not be at home. Good! Spintext! Oh the Fanatick one ey'd Parson!

Vain. Ay.

Bell. Reads. Hum, Hum — That your Conversation will be much more agreeable, if you can counterfeit his Habit to blind the Servants. Very good! Then I must be disguised — With all my Heart — It adds a Gusto to an Amour; gives it the greater resemblance of Theft; and among us lewd Mortals, the deeper the Sin the sweeter. Frank I'm amaz'd at thy good Nature —

Vain. Faith I hate Love when 'tis forced upon a Man; as I do Wine — And this Business is none of my seeking; I only hapned to be once or twice, where *Letitia* was the handsomest Woman in Company, so consequently apply'd my self to her — And it seems she has taken me at my word — Had you been there or any Body, 't had been the same.

Bell. I wish I may succeed as the same.

Vain. Never doubt it; for if the Spirit of Cuckoldom be once raised up in a Woman, the Devil can't lay it, till she has don't.

Bell. Prithce, what sort of Fellow is *Fondlewife*?

Vain. A kind of Mungrel Zealot, sometimes very precise and peevish: But I have seen him pleasant enough in his way, much addicted to Jealousie, but more to Fondness: So that as he is often Jealous without a Cause, he's as often satisfied without Reason.

Bell. A very even Temper and fit for my purpose. I must get your Man *Setter* to provide my Disguise.

Vain.

Vain. Ay, you may take him for good and all if you will, for you have made him fit for no body else — Well —

Bell. You're going to visit in return of *Silvia's* Letter — Poor Rogue. Any hour of the day or night will serve her — But do you know nothing of a new Rival there?

Vain. Yes, *Heartwell*, that surly, old, pretended Woman-hater thinks her Vertuous; that's one reason why I fail her: I would have her fret her self out of conceit with me, that she may entertain some thoughts of him. I know he visits her ev'ry day.

Bell. Yet rails on still, and thinks his Love unknown to us; a little time will swell him so, he must be forc'd to give it birth, and the discovery must needs be very pleasant from himself, to see what pains he will take; and how he will strain to be deliver'd of a Secret, when he has miscarried on't already.

Vain. Well, good Morrow, let's dine together, I'll meet at the old place.

Bell. With all my Heart, it lies convenient for us to pay our Afternoon Service to our Mistresses; find I am damnably in Love; I'm so uneasy for not seeing *Belinda* yesterday.

Vain. But I saw my *Araminta*, yet am as impatient. [Exit.

Bell. Why whata Cormorant in Love am I! who not contented with the slavery of honourable Love in one place, and the pleasure of enjoying some half a score Mistresses of my own acquiring; must yet take *Vainlove's* Business upon my hands, because it lay too heavy upon his; So am not only forc'd to lie with other Mens Wives for 'em, but must so undertake the harder Task of obliging their Mistresses — I must take up, or I shall never hold out;

out; Flesh and Blood cannot bear it always.

Enter Sharper.

Sharp. I'm sorry to see this, *Ned*: Once a Man comes to his Soliloquys I give him for gone.

Bell. *Sharper*, I'm glad to see thee.

Sharp. What, is *Belinda* cruel, that you are so thoughtful?

Bell. No faith, not for that — But there's a Business of Consequence fall'n out to day that requires some Consideration.

Sharp. Prithce what mighty Business of Consequence canst thou have?

Bell. Why you must know, 'tis a piece of Work toward the finishing of an Alderman; it seems I must put the last hand to it, and dub him Cuckold that he may be of equal Dignity with the rest of his Brethren: So I must beg *Belinda's* Pardon —

Sharp. Faith e'en give her over for good-and-all you can have no hopes of getting her for a Mistress and she is too proud, too inconstant, too affected and too witty, and too handsome for a Wife.

Bell. But she can't have too much Money — There's twelve thousand pound *Tom* — 'Tis true she is excessively foppish and affected, but in my Conscience I believe the Baggage loves me; for she never speaks well of me her self, nor suffers any body else to rail at me. Then as I told you there's twelve thousand Pound — Hum — Why faint upon second Thoughts, she does not appear to be so very affected neither — Give her her due, think the Woman's a Woman, and that's all. — Such I'm sure I shall like her, for the Devil takes me if I don't love all the Sex.

Sharp. And here comes one who swears heartily he hates all the Sex.

Enter Heartwell.

Bell. Who *Heartwell*! Ay, but he knows better things — How now *George*, where hast thou been foisting odious Truths, and entertaining Company like a Physician, with discourse of their diseases and infirmities? What fine Lady hast thou been putting out of conceit with her self, and perswading that the face she had been making all the morning was none of her own? for I know thou art as unmannerly and as unwelcome to a Woman, as a Looking glass after the Small-pox.

Heart. I confess I have not been sneering fulsome Lies and nauseous Flattery; fawning upon a little tawdry Whore, that will fawn upon me again, and entertain any Puppy that comes, like a Tumbler with the same tricks over and over: For such I guess may have been your late employment.

Bell. Would thou hadst come a little sooner, *Love* would have wrought thy Conversion, and been a Champion for the Cause.

Heart. What, has he been here? that's one of those April-fools, is always upon some errand that's to no purpose, ever embarking in Adventures, yet never comes to harbour.

Sharp. That's because he always sets out in foul Weather, loves to buffet with the Winds, meet the Tide and sail in the teeth of opposition.

Heart. What has he not dropt Anchor at *Ara-*
Anta?

Bell. Truth out is she fits his temper best; is a kind of floating Island; sometimes seems in reach, then vanishes and keeps him busied in the search.

Sharp. She had need have a good share of sense to manage so Capricious a Lover.

Bell. Faith I don't know, he's of a temper the
B most

most easie to himself in the World; he takes as much always of an Amour as he cares for, and quits it when it grows stale or unpleasant.

Sharp. An argument of very little Passion, very good Understanding, and very ill Nature.

Heart. And proves that *Vainlove* plays the Fool with Discretion.

Sharp. You *Bellmour* are bound in gratitude to stickle for him; you with pleasure reap that fruit, which he takes pains to sow: he does the drudgery in the Mine, and you stamp your image on the Gold.

Bell. He's of another opinion, and says I do the drudgery in the Mine: well, we have each our share of sport, and each that which he likes best; 'tis his diversion to Set, 'tis mine to Cover the Partridge.

Heart. And it should be mine to let 'em go again.

Sharp. Not till you had Mouth'd a little *George*; I think that's all thou art fit for now.

Heart. Good Mr. Young-fellow, you'r mistaken; as able as your self, and as nimble too, tho I may'nt have so much Mercury in my Limbs. 'Tis true indeed, I don't force Appetite, but wait the natural call of my Lust, and think it time enough to be lewd, after I have had the temptation.

Bell. Time enough! ay too soon, I should rather have expected, from a person of your gravity.

Heart. Yet it is oftentimes too late with some of you young, termagant flashy sinners — you have all the guilt of the intention, and none of the pleasure of the practice — 'Tis true you are so eager in pursuit of the temptation, that you save the Devil the trouble of leading you into it. Not is it out of discretion, that you don't swallow that very Hook your selves have baited, but you are cloy'd with the preparative, and what you mean

for a Whet, turns the edge of your puny Stomachs. Your Love is like your Courage which you shew for the first year or two upon all occasions; till in a little time, being disabled or disarm'd, you abate of your vigour; and that daring Blade which was so often drawn, is bound to the Peace for ever after.

Bell. Thou art an old Fornicator of a singular good Principle indeed! and art for encouraging Youth, that they may be as wicked as thou art at thy years.

Heart. I am for having every body be what they pretend to be; a Whoremaster be a Whoremaster; and not like *Vainlove*, kiss a Lap-dog with passion, when it would disgust him from the Ladies own Lips.

Bell. That only happens sometimes, where the Dog has the sweeter Breath, for the more cleanly conveyance. But *George*, you must not quarrel with little Gallantries of this nature: Women are often won by 'em. Who would refuse to kiss a Lap-Dog, if it were preliminary to the Lips of his Lady?

Sharp. Or omit playing with her Fan, and cooling her if she were hot, when it might intitle him to the office of warming her when she should be cold?

Bell. What is it to read a Play in a rainy day, when it may be the means of getting into a fair Ladies Books? Though you should be now and then interrupted in a witty Scene, and she perhaps prevent her laughter, till the Jest were over; even this may be born with, considering the reward in prospect.

Heart. I confess you that are Womens Asses bear greater burdens, are forced to undergo Dressing, Dancing, Singing, Sighing, Whining, Rhy-
ming, Flattering, Lying, Grinning, Cringing,
and

and the dudgey of loving to boot.

Bell. O Brute, the drudgery of Loving!

Heart. Ay; why to come to Love through all these incumbrances, is like coming to an Estate overcharg'd with Debts, which by the time you have pay'd, yields no further profit than what the bare tillage and manuring of the Land will produce at the expence of your own Sweat.

Bell. Prithee how dost thou love?

Sharp. He! he hates the Sex.

Heart. So I hate Physick too——yet I may love to take it for my Health.

Bell. Well come off *George*, if at any time you should be taken straying.

Sharp. He has need of such an excuse, considering the present state of his Body.

Heart. How d'ee mean?

Sharp. Why if whoring be purging, as you call it, then I may say Mariage is entering into a course of Physick.

Bell. How *George*, does the Wind blow there?

Heart. It will as soon blow North and by South——marry quotha! I hope in Heaven I have a greater portion of Grace, and I think I have baited too many of those Traps, to be caught in one my self.

Bell. Who the Devil would have thee? unless 'twere an Oyster-woman, to propagate young Fry for *Billingsgate*——thy Talent will never recommend thee to any thing of better quality.

Heart. My Talent is chiefly that of speaking truth, which I don't expect should ever recommend me to People of Quality——I thank Heaven, I have very honestly purchas'd the hatred of all the great Families in Town.

Sharp. And you in return of Spleen hate them. But could you hope to be receiv'd into the Alliance of a noble Family——

Heart

Heart. No, I hope I shall never merit that affliction — to be punish'd with a Wife of Birth — to be a Stag of the first Head and bear my Horns aloft, like one of the supporters of my Wifes Coat. S'death I would not be a Cuckold to e're an illustrious Whore in *England*.

Bell. What not to make your Family Man! and provide for your Children?

Sharp. For her Children you mean.

Heart. Ay there you've nick't it — there's the Devil upon Devil — Oh the Pride and Joy of Heart 'twould be to me, to have my Son and Heir resemble such a Duke — to have a fleering Coxcomb scoff and cry, Mr. your Son's mighty like his Grace, has just his smile and air of's Face. Then replies another — methinks he has more of the Marquess of such a place, about his Nose and Eyes; though a' has my Lord what d'ee-cals Mouth to a tittle — Then I to put it off as unconcern'd, come chuck the Infant under the chin, force a smile and cry, ay, the Boy takes after his Mothers relations — when the Devil and she knows, 'tis a little Compound of the whole Body of Nobility.

Bell.

Sharp.] Ha! ha! ha!

Bell. Well but *George* I have one Question to ask you —

Heart. Pox I have prattled away my time — I hope you are in no haste for an Answer — for I shan't stay now. [*Looking on his Watch.*

Bell. Nay prithee *George* —

Heart. No, besides my business, I see a Fool coming this way. Adieu. [*Exit.*

Bell. What does he mean? Oh here he comes, stand close, let 'em pass.

Sir Joseph Wittoll and Capt. Bluffe cross the Stage.

Sharp. What in the name of wonder is it?

Bell. Why a Fool.

Sharp. 'Tis a rawdry Outside.

Bell. And a very beggarly Lining — yet he may be worth your acquaintance — a little of thy Chymistry Tom, may extract Gold from that Dirt.

Sharp. Say you so? faith I am as poor as a Chymist, and would be as industrious. But what was he that followed him? is not he a Dragon that watches those Golden Pippins?

Bell. Hang him, no, he a Dragon! if he be 'tis a very peaceful one; I can ensure his Anger dormant; or should he seem to rouse, 'tis but well lashing him, and he will sleep like a Top.

Sharp. Ay, is he of that kidney?

Bell. Yet is ador'd by that biggot *Sir Joseph Wittoll*, as the image of Valour: He calls him his Back, and indeed they are never asunder — yet last night, I know not by what mischance, the Knight was alone, and had fallen into the hands of some Night-walkers, who I suppose would have pillag'd him: But I chanc'd to come by and rescued him, though I believe he was heartily frightened; for as soon as ever he was loose, he ran away, without staying to see who help'd him:

Sharp. Is that Bully of his in the Army?

Bell. No, but is a pretender, and wears the habit of a Soldier, which now a' days as often cloaks Cowardice, as a black Gown does Atheism — You must know he has been abroad — went purely to run away from a Campaign; enrich'd himself with the plunder of a few Oaths; — and here vents 'em against the General, who slighting

me

men of merit, and preferring only those of interest, has made him quit the Service.

Sharp. Wherein no doubt he magnifies his own performance?

Bell. Speaks miracles; is the Drum to his own praise — the only implement of a Soldier he resembles, like that, being full of blustering noise and emptiness —

Sharp. And like that, of no use but to be beaten.

Bell. Right, but then the comparison breaks, for he will take a drubbing with as little noise as a Pulpit Cushion.

Sharp. His name, and I have done?

Bell. Why that, to pass it current too, he has gilded with a Title; he is call'd, Capt. *Bluffe*.

Sharp. Well, I'll endeavour his acquaintance — you steer another Course, are bound,

For Love's Island: I, for the Golden Coast.

May each succeed in what he wishes most. Exeunt.



A C T. I I.

S C E N E I.

Sir Joseph Wittol, Sharper following.

Sharper.

Sure that's he, and alone.

Sir Jo. Um — Ay this, this is the very damn'd place, the inhumane Cannibals, the bloody-minded Villains would have Butcher'd me last

B 4

night:

night: No doubt, they would have flea'd me alive; have sold my Skin, and devour'd my Members.

Sharp. How's this!

Sir 70. An it hadn't been for a civil Gentleman as came by and frightned 'em away — but agad I durst not stay to give him thanks.

Sharp. This must be *Bellmour* he means — ! ha I have a thought —

Sir 70. Zooks, would the Captain would come; the very remembrance makes me quake; agad I shall never be reconciled to this place heartily.

Sharp. 'Tis but trying, and being where I am at worst, now luck! — curs'd Fortune! this must be the place, this damn'd unlucky place —

Sir 70. Agad and so 'tis — why here has been more mischief done I perceive.

Sharp. No, 'tis gone, 'tis lost — ten thousand Devils on that chance which drew me hither? ay here, just here, this spot to me is Hell; nothing to be found, but the despair of what I've lost.

[*Looking about as in search.*

Sir 70. Poor Gentleman — by the Lord Harry I'll stay no longer, for I have found too —

Sharp. Ha! who's that has found? what have you found? restore it quickly, or by —

Sir 70. Not I Sir, not I, as I've a Soul to be sav'd; I have found nothing but what has been to my loss, as I may say, and as you were saying Sir.

Sharp. O your Servant Sir, you are safe then it seems; 'tis an ill Wind that blows no body good: Well, you may rejoyce over my ill fortune, since it pay'd the price of your ransome.

Sir 70. I rejoyce! agad not I Sir; I'm very sorry for your loss, with all my Heart, Blood and Guts Sir; and if you did but know me, you'd ne'er say I were so ill natur'd.

Sharp. Know you! why can you be so ungrateful, to forget me?

Sir

The Old Batchelour.

25

Sir 70. O Lord, forget him! No, no Sir, I don't forget you — because I never saw your face before, agad. Ha, ha, ha.

Sharp. How!

[Angrily.]

Sir 70. Stay, stay Sir, let me recollect — he's a damn'd angry Fellow — I believe I had better remember him; till I can get out of his sight; but out o' sight o' mind agad.

[Aside.]

Sharp. Methought the Service I did you last night Sir, in preserving you from those Russians, might have taken better root in your shallow memory.

Sir 70. Gads-Daggers-Belts-Blades and Scabbards, this is the very Gentleman! how shall I make him a return suitable to the Greatness of his merit — I had a pretty thing to that purpose, if he han't frighted it out of my memory. Hem! hem! Sir, I must submissively implore your pardon for my transgression of ingratitude and omission; having my intire dependance Sir upon the superfluiry of your goodness, which, like an inundation will, I hope, totally immerge the recollection of my error, and leave me floating in sight, upon the full blown Bladders of repentance — by the help of which, I shall once more hope to swim into your favour.

[Bows.]

Sharp. So — h, O Sir I am easily pacify'd, the acknowledgment of a Gentleman —

Sir 70. Acknowledgment! Sir I am all over acknowledgment! and will not stick to shew it in the greatest extremity, by night, or by day, in sickness, or in health, winter, or summer, all seasons and occasions shall testify the reality and gratitude of your superabundant humble Servant Sir Joseph Wittol Knight. Hem! hem!

Sharp. Sir Joseph Wittol!

Sir 70. The same Sir, of Wittol-hall in Comitatu Bucks.

B 5

Sharp.

Sharp. Is it possible! Then I am happy to have obliged the *Mirroure of Knighthood and Pink of Courtesie* in the Age. Let me embrace you.

Sir 70. O Lord Sir!

Sharp. My loss, I esteem as a trifle repay'd with interest, since it has purchas'd me the friendship and acquaintance of the person in the World, whose Character I admire.

Sir 70. You are only pleas'd to say so Sir— But pray if I may be so bold, what is that loss you mention?

Sharp. O term it no longer so Sir. In the Scuffle last night I only dropt a Bill of a hundred Pound, which I confess, I came half despairing to recover; but thanks to my better Fortune—

Sir 70. You have found it Sir then it seems; I profess I'm heartily glad—

Sharp. Sir your humble Servant—I don't question but you are; that you have so cheap an opportunity of expressing your gratitude and generosity. Since the refunding so trivial a Sum, will wholly acquit you, and doubly engage me.

Sir 70. What a dickens does he mean by a trivial Sum [*aside*] But han't you found it Sir!

Sharp. No otherwise I vow to Gad but in my hopes in you Sir.

Sir 70. Humh.

Sharp. But that's sufficient—'Twere injustice to doubt the honour of Sir 70. *Wittel.*

Sir 70. O Lord Sir.

Sharp. You are above, I'm sure, a thought so low, to suffer me to lose what was ventur'd in your service; Nay 'twas in a manner—paid down for your deliverance; 'twas so much lent you—And you scorn, I'll say that for you—

Sir 70. Nay I'll say that for my self, with your leave Sir, I do scorn a dirty thing. But agad I'm

a little out of Pocket at present.

Sharp. Pshaw you can't want a hundred Pound. Your Word is sufficient any where: 'Tis but borrowing so much dirt; you have large Acres and can soon repay it — Mony is but Dirt Sir *Joseph* — Meer Dirt.

Sir *Jo.* But I profess, 'tis a Dirt I have washed my hands of at present; I have laid it all out upon my Back.

Sharp. Are you so extravagant in Cloaths Sir *Joseph*?

Sir *Jo.* Ha, ha, ha, a very good Jest I profess; ha, ha, ha, a very good Jest; and I did not know that I had said it, and that's a better Jest than tother. 'Tis a sign you and I ha'n't been long acquainted; you have lost a good Jest for want of knowing me — I only mean a Friend of mine whom I call my Back; he sticks as close to me, and follows me through all dangers — he is indeed Back, Breast and Headpiece as it were to me — agad he's a brave Fellow — Pauh, I am quite another thing, when I am with him: I don't fear the Devil (God bless us) almost if he be by. Ah — had he been with me last night —

Sharp. If he had Sir, what then? he could have done no more, nor perhaps have suffer'd so much — had he a hundred Pound to lose? [*Angrily.*]

Sir *Jo.* O Lord Sir by no means (but I might have sav'd a hundred Pound) I meant innocently as I hope to be sav'd Sir (a damn'd hot Fellow) only as I was saying, I let him have all my ready Mony to redeem his great Sword from Limbo — But Sir I have a Letter of Credit to Alderman *Fondlewife*, as far as two hundred Pound, and this Afternoon you shall see I am a Person, such a one as you would wish to have met with.

Sharp. That you are I'll be sworn [*aside*] Why
thats

thats great and like your self.

Enter Bluffe.

Sir 7o. O here a' comes — Ay my Hector of Troy, welcome my Bully, my Back; agad my heart has gone a pit-pat for thee.

Bluff. How how, my young Knight? Not for fear I hope; he that knows me must be a stranger to fear.

Sir 7o. Nay agad I hate fear, ever since I had like to have dy'd of a fright. But —

Bluff. But! Look you here boy, here's your antidote, here's your Jesuits Powder for a shaking fit — But who hast thou got with thee, is he of mettle?

[Laying his Hand upon his Sword.]

Sir 7o. Ay Bully, a devilish smart Fellow, 'a will fight like a Cock.

Bluff. Say you so? then I honour him — But has he been abroad? for every Cock will fight upon his own Dunghil.

Sir 7o. I don't know, but I'll present you —

Bluff. I'll recommend my self — Sir I honour you; I understand you love Fighting, I reverence a man that loves Fighting, Sir I Kiss your Hilts.

Sharp. Sir you Servant, but you are misinform'd, for unless it be to serve my particular Friend, as Sir Joseph here, my Country, or my Religion, or in some very Justifiable Cause, I'me not for it.

Bluff. O Lord I beg your pardon Sir, I find you are not of my Pallat, you can't relish a Dish of Fighting without Sweet Sawce. Now I think — Fighting for Fighting sake's sufficient Cause; Fighting to me's Religion and the Laws.

Sir 7o. Ah, well said my Hero; was not that great Sir? by the Lord-Harry he says true; Fighting, is Meat, Drink and Cloth to him. But Back,

this

this Gentleman is one of the best Friends I have in the World and saved my Life last Night — You know I told you.

Bluff. Ay ! Then I honour him again --- Sir may I crave your name ?

Sharp. Ay Sir , my name's *Sharper*.

Sir *Jo.* Pray Mr. *Sharper* Embrace my Back — very well — by the Lord *Harry* Mr. *Sharper* he's as brave a Fellow as Cannibal, are not you Bully — Back ?

Sharp. *Hannibal* I believe you mean Sir *Joseph*.

Bluff. Undoubtedly he did Sir ; faith *Hannibal* was a very pretty Fellow — but Sir *Joseph* , comparisons are odious — *Hannibal* was a very pretty Fellow in those Days , it must be granted — but Alas Sir ! were he alive now , he would be nothing in the Earth.

Sharp. How Sir ! I make a doubt , if there be at this Day a greater General breathing.

Bluff. Oh excuse me Sir ; have you serv'd abroad Sir ?

Sharp. Not I really Sir.

Bluff. Oh I thought so — Why then you can know nothing Sir : I'me afraid you scarce know the History of the Late War in *Flandres* , with all its particulars ?

Sharp. Not I , Sir , no more than publick Letters , or Gazettes tell us.

Bluff. Gazette ! Why there again now --- Why , Sir , there are not three words of truth , the Year round , put into the Gazette -- I'll tell you a strange thing now as to that --- You must know , Sir , I was resident in *Flandres* the last Campaign ; had a small Post there , but no matter for that -- Perhaps , Sir , there was a scarce any thing of moment done but an humble Servant of yours, that shall be nameless , was an Eye-witness of --- I won't say

say had the greatest share in't. Tho' I might say that too, since I am no Body you know --- Well, Mr. *Sharper*, would you think it? In all this time --- as I hope for a Truncheon --- this rascally Gazette-writer never so much as once mention'd me --- Not once by the Wars --- Took no more notice, than as if *Nol. Bluffe* had not been in the Land of the Living.

Sharp. Strange!

Sir *Jo*. Yet by the Lord *Harry* 'tis true Mr. *Sharper*, for I went every day to Coffee houses to read the Gazette my self

Bluff. Ay ay, no matter --- You see Mr. *Sharper* after all I am content to retire --- Live a private Person --- *Scipio* and others have done it.

Sharp. Impudent Rogue.

[*aside*.

Sir *Jo*. Ay, this damn'd Modesty of yours --- Agad if he would put in for't he might be made General himself yet.

Bluff. Oh fy, no Sir *Joseph* --- You know I hate this.

Sir *Jo*. Let me but tell Mr. *Sharper* a little, how you ate fire once out of the mouth of a Cannon --- agad he did: those impenetrable Whiskers of his have confronted Flames ---

Bluff. Death, what do you mean Sir *Joseph*?

Sir *Jo*. Look you now, I tell you he's so modest he'll own nothing.

Bluff. Pish you have put me out; I have forgot what I was about, Pray hold your Tongue, and give me leave. [*Angrily*.

Sir *Jo*. I am dumb.

Bluff. This Sword I think I was telling you of Mr. *Sharper* --- This Sword I'll maintain to be the best Divine, Anatomist, Lawyer or Casuist in Europe; it shall decide a Controversie or spilt a Cause ---

Sir

The Old Batchelour.

31

Sir 7o. Nay, now I must speak; it will split a Hair, by the Lord Harry, I have seen it.

Bluff. Zouns Sir, it's a Lie, you have not seen it, nor shant see it; Sir I say you can't see; what de'e say to that now?

Sir 7o. I am blind.

Bluff. Death, had any other Man interrupted me—

Sir 7o. Good Mr. Sharper speak to him; I dare not look that way.

Sharp. Captain, Sir Joseph's penitent.

Bluff. O I am calm Sir, calm as a discharged Culverin— But 'twas indiscreet when you know what will provoke me --- Nay come Sir Joseph, you know my Heat's soon over.

Sir 7o. Well I am a Fool sometimes— But I'm sorry.

Bluff. Enough.

Sir 7o. Come well go take a Glass to drown Animosities. Mr. Sharper will you partake?

Sharp. I wait on you Sir? nay pray Captain— You are Sir Joseph's Back. [Exeunt]

SCENE Changes to Lodgings.

Enter Araminta, Belinda.

Belinda.

Ay! nay Dear— prithe good, dear sweet Cousin no more. Oh Gad, I swear you'd make me sick to hear you.

Aram. Bless me! what have I said to move you thus.

Belin. Oh you have raved, talked idly, and all a Commendation of that filthy, awkward, two-legged Creature, Man— you don't know what you say, your Fever has transported you.

Aram.

Aram. If Love be the Fever which you mean, kind Heav'n avert the cure: Let me have Oil to feed that Flame and never let it be extinct, till I my self am Ashes.

Belin. There was a Whine — O Gad I hate your horrid Fancy — This Love is the Devil, and sure to be in Love is to be possess'd — Tis in the Head, the Heart, the Blood, — All over — O Gad you are quite spoil'd — I shall loath the sight of Man-kind for your sake.

Aram. Fie, this is gross Affectation — A little of *Bellmour's* Company would change the Scene.

Belin. Filthy Fellow! I wonder Cousin —

Aram. I wonder Cousin you should imagine, I dont perceive you love him.

Belin. Oh, I love your hideous Fancy! Ha, ha, ha, love a Man!

Aram. Love a Man! yes, you would not love a Beast.

Belin. Of all Beasts not an Ass — Which is so like your *Vainlove* — Lard I have seen an Ass look so Chagrin, Ha, ha, ha, (you must pardon me I can't help Laughing) that an absolute Lover would have concluded the poor Creature to have had Darts, and Flames, and Altars, and all that in his Breast.

Araminta, come I'll talk seriously to you now; could you but see with my Eyes, the buffoonry of one Scene of Address, a Lover, set out with all his Equipage and Appurtenances; O Gad! sure you would — But you play the Game, and consequently can't see the Miscarriages obvious to every stander by.

Aram. Yes, yes, I can see something near it when you and *Bellmour* meet. You don't know that you dreamt of *Bellmour* last night, and call'd him aloud in your sleep?

Belin. Pish, I can't help dreaming of the Devil sometimes; would you from thence infer I love him?

Aram

Aram. But that's not all, you caught me in your Arms when you named him, and press'd me to your Bosom — Sure if I had not pinch'd you till you wak'd, you had stifled me with Kisses.

Belin. O barbarous Asperision!

Aram. No Asperision, Cousin, we are alone — Nay, I can tell you more.

Belin. I deny it all.

Aram. What, before you hear it?

Belin. My Denyal is premediated like your Malice — Lard, Cousin, you talk odly — Whatever the Matter is, O my Soul, I'm afraid you'l follow evil Courses.

Aram. Ha, ha, ha; this is pleasant.

Belin. You may laugh, but —

Aram. Ha, ha, ha.

Belin. You think the malicious Grin becomes you — The Devil take Bellemour — Why do you tell me of him?

Aram. Oh is it come out — now you are angry, I am sure you love him.

Belin. I tell no body else Cousin — I have not betrayed you yet.

Belin. Prithee tell it all the world, it's false. [Calls;

Aram. Come then, Kiss and Friends.

Belin. Pish.

Aram. Prithee don't be so Peevish.

Belin. Prithee dont be so Impertinent;

Aram. Ha, ha, ha.

Enter Betty.

Betty. Did your Ladyship call Madam?

Belin. Get my Hoods and Tippet, and bid the Footman call a Chair. [Exit Betty.

Aram. I hope you are not going out in dudgeon, Cousin?

C

En-

*Enter Footman.**Foot.* Madam there are —*Belin.* Is there a Chair?*Foot.* No, Madam there are Mr. Bellmour and Mr. Vainlove to wait upon your Ladyship.*Aram.* Are they below?*Foot.* No Madam, they sent before, to know if you were at home.*Belin.* The Visit's to you, Cousin, I suppose I am at my liberty.*Aram.* Be ready to shew 'em up.*[Exit. Footman.]**I* cant tell, Cousin, I believe we are equally concern'd: but if you continue your Humour, it won't be very entertaining ——— *[I know she'd fain be persuaded to stay.]**Belin.* I shall oblige you, in leaving you to the full and free enjoyment of that Conversation you admire.*Enter Betty, with Hoods and Looking-glass.**Belin.* Let me see; hold the Glass — Lard I look wretchedly to day.*Aram.* Betty, why don't you help my Cousin*[Putting on her Hood]**Belin.* Hold off your Fists, and see that he get a Chair with a high Roof, or a very low Seat — Stay, Come back here you Mrs Fidget — You are so ready to go to the Footman — Here take 'em all again, my mind's chang'd I won't go*[Exit Betty with the things]**Aram.* So, this I expected — You won't oblige me then, Cousin, and let me have all your Company to my self?

Belin. No, upon deliberation, I have too much Charity to trust you to your self. The Devil watches all opportunities, and in this favourable disposition of your Mind, Heav'n knows how far you may be tempted: I am tender of your Reputation.

Aram. I am oblig'd to you — who's malicious now, *Belinda*?

Belin. Not I, witness my Heart, I stay out of pure affection.

Aram. In my Conscience I believe you.

Enter Bellmour, Vainlove.

Bell. So Fortune be prais'd! To find you both within, Ladies, is ---

Aram. No Miracle, I hope?

Bell. Not o' your side, Madam, I confess — my Tyrant there and I, are two that can never come together.

Belin. Nor are never like --- Yet we often meet and clash.

Bell. How never like! marry *Hymen* forbid. But as it is to run so extravagantly in Debt, I have had out such a world of Love in your Service, that you think you can never be able to pay me: So shun me for the same reason that you would Dun.

Belin. Ay, on my Conscience, and the most pertinent and troublesome of Duns --- A Dun Money will be quiet, when he sees his Debtor not wherewithal — But a Dun for Love is an eternal Torment that never rests —

Bell. Till he has created Love where there was none, and then gets it for his pains. For importunity in Love, like importunity at Court, first serves its own interest, and then pursues it for Favour.

Aram. Favours that are got by Impudence and Importunity, are like Discoveries from the Rack, when the afflicted person, for ease, sometimes confesses Secrets his heart knows nothing of.

Vain. I should rather think Favours so gain'd to be due Rewards to indefagitable Devotion— For as Love is a Deity, he must be serv'd by Prayer.

Belin. O gad! would you would all pray to Love then, and let us alone.

Vain. You are the Temples of Love, and 't' through you, our Devotion must be convey'd.

Aram. Rather poor silly Idols of your own making, which upon the least displeasure you forsake, and set up new— Every Man now changes his Mistress and his Religion, as his humour varies or his interest.

Vain. O Madam—

Aram. Nay come, I find we are growing serious, and then we are in great danger of being dull— If my Musick-master be not gone I'll entertain you with a new Song, which comes pretty near my own Opinion of Love and your Sex— Who's there? [C]

Enter Footman.

Is Mr. Gavot gone?

Foot. Only to the next door, Madam; I'll fetch him. [E]

Bell. Why, you won't hear me with Patience.

Aram. What's the matter, Cousin?

Bell. Nothing, only—

Belin. Prithee hold thy Tongue --- Lard, has so pester'd me with Flames and Stuff--- I th I shan't endure the sight of a Fire this Two month.

Bell. Yet all can't melt that cruel frozen Heart.

Belin. O Gad I hate your hideous Fancy --- You said that once before --- If you must talk impertinently, for Heav'n's sake let it be with variety; don't come always, like the Devil, wrapt in Flames --- I'll not hear a Sentence more, that begins with an, I burn --- Or an, I beseech you, Madam.

Bell. But tell me how you would be Ador'd? --- I am very tractable.

Belin. Then know, I would be ador'd in silence.

Bell. Humph, I thought so, that you might have all the talk to your self --- you had better let me speak, for if my thoughts fly to any pitch, I shall make villainous signs.

Belin. What will you get by that; to make such signs as I won't understand?

Bell. Ay, but if I'm Tongue ty'd, I must have all my Actions free to --- quicken your Apprehension --- and I gad let me tell you, my most prevailing Argument is express'd in dumb shew.

Enter Musick-Master.

Aram. O I am glad we shall have a Song to divert the Discourse --- Pray oblige us with the last new Song.

S. O N G.

I

Thus to a ripe, consenting Maid,

Poor, old, repenting Delia said,

Would you long preserve your Lover,

Would you still his Goddess reign,

Never let him all discover,

Never let him much obtain.

C 3

II.

I I.

Men will admire, adore and dye,
 While wishing at your Feet they lye:
 But admitting their Embraces,
 Wakes 'em from the Golden Dream;
 Nothing's new besides our Faces,
 Every Woman is the same.

Aram. So, how de'e like the Song, Gentlemen?
Bell. O very well perform'd — but I don't much
 admire the words.

Aram. I expected it — there's too much Truth
 in 'em: If Mr. Gavor will walk with us in the
 Garden, we'll have it once again — You may like
 it better at second hearing. You'll bring my Cousin

Bell. Faith, Madam, I dare not speak to her,
 but I'll make Sigus.

[*Adresss Belinda in dumb* *hew*
Belin. O fogh, your dumb Rhetorick is more
 ridiculous, than your talking Impertinence; as an
 Ape is a much more troublesome Animal than
 a Parrot.

Aram. Ay, Cousin, and 'tis a sign the Crea-
 tures mimick Nature well; for there are few men
 but do more silly things than they say.

Bell. Well, I find my Apishness has paid the
 Ransome for my Speech, and set it at Liberty —
 Tho, I confels, I could be well enough pleas'd
 to drive on a Love bargain, in that silent manne
 — 'twould save a Man a World of Lying and Swear-
 ing at the Years end. Besides I have had a little
 Experience, that brings to my mind —

*When Wit and Reason both, have fail'd to move,
 Kind Looks and Actions, from Success, do prove,
 Ev'n Silence may be Eloquent in Love.*

Exeunt Omnes.

ACT

A C T. I I I.

S C E N E I; *The Street.*

Silvia and Lucy.

Silvia.

Will a' not come then?

Lucy. Yes, yes, come, I warrant him, if you will go in and be ready to receive him.

Silv. Why did you not tell me? — Whom mean you?

Lucy. Whom you should mean, *Heartwell*.

Silv. Senseless Creature, I meant my *Vainlove*.

Lucy. You may as soon hope, to recover your own Maidenhead, as his Love. Therefore e'n set your heart at rest, and in the name of opportunity mind your own business. Strike *Heartwell* home, before the Bait's worn off the Hook. Age will come. He nibbled fairly yesterday, and no doubt will be eager enough to day, to swallow the Temptation.

Silv. Well, since there's no remedy — Yet tell me — For I would know, though to the anguish of my Soul; how did he refuse? Tell me — how did he receive my Letter, in anger or in scorn?

Lucy. Neither; but what was ten times worse, with damn'd, senseless indifference. By this Light I could have spit in his Face — Receive it! why he receiv'd it, as I would one of your Lovers that should come empty handed; as a Court Lord does his Mercers Bill; or a begging Dedication: —

as received it, as if 't had been a Lettter from his Wife.

Silv. What did he not read it?

Lucy. Hum'd it over, gave you his Respects, and said, he would take time to peruse it — but then he was in haste.

Silv. Respects, and persue it! He's gone, and *Araminta* has bewitch'd him from me — Oh how the name of Rival fires my blood — I could curse 'em both. Eternal Jealousie attend her Love; and disappointment meet his Lust. Oh that I could revenge the torment he has caus'd — Methinks I feel the woman strong within me, and Vengeance itches in the room of Love.

Lucy. I have that in my head may make mischief.

Silv. How, dear *Lucy*?

Lucy. You know *Aramintas* dissembled coyness has won, and keeps him hers —

Silv. Could we perswade him, that she loves another —

Lucy. No, you're out; could we perswade him, that she doats on him, himself — Contrive a kind Letter as from her, 'twould disgust his nicety, and take away his stomach.

Silv. Impossible, 'twill never take.

Lucy. Trouble not your head. Let me alone — I will inform my self of what past between 'em to day, and about it streight — Hold, I'me mistaken, or that's *Heartwel*, who stands talking at the Corner — 'tis he — go get you in Madam, receive him pleasantly, dress up your Face in Innocence and Smiles; and dissemble the very want of dissimulation — You know what will take him.

Silv. 'Tis as hard to counterfeit Love, as it is to conceal it: but I'll do my weak endeavour, though I fear I have not Art.

Lucy. Hang Art, Madam, and trust to Nature for dissembling.

Man,

The Old Batchelour.

41

*Man was by Nature Womans Cully made:
We, never are but by our selves betray'd.*

Exeunt.

Enter Heartwell, Vainlove and Bellmour following.

Bell. Hift, hift, is not that *Heartwell* going to *Silvia*?

Vain He's talking to himself, I think; pritcheele's try if we can hear him.

Heart. Why whether in the Devils name am I going now? Hum — Let me think — Is not this *Silvia's* House, the Cave of that Enchantress, and which consequently I ought to shun as I would infection? To enter here, is to put on the evenom'd Shirt, to run into the embraces of a Fever, and in some raving fit, be led to plunge my self into that more Consuming Fire, a Womans Arms. Ha! well recollected, I will recover my reason, and be gone.

Bell. Now *Venus* forbid! *Vain.* Hush —

Heart. Well, why do you not move? Feet do your Office — Not one Inch; no, Foregod I'm caught — There stands my North, and thither my Needle points — Now could I curse my self, yet cannot repent. O thou delicious, damn'd, dear, destructive Woman! S'death how the young Fellows will hoot me! I shall be the Jest of the Town: nay in two days, I expect to be chronicled in Dirty, and sung in woful Ballad, to the Tune of the Superannuated Maidens Comfort, or the Batchelors Fall; and upon the third, I shall be hang'd in Effigie, pasted up for the exemplary Ornament of necessary Houses and Coblers Stalls — Death, I can't think on't — I'll run into the danger to lose the apprehension.

[*Goes in.*

Bell. A very certain remedy, *probatum est* — Ha,

C 5

ha,

The Old Batchelour.

ha, ha, poor George thou art i'th right, thou hast sold thy self to Laughter; the ill-natur'd Town will find the Jest just where thou hast lost it. Ha, ha, how a' struggled, like an old Lawyer, between two Fees.

Vain. Or a young Wench, between pleasure and reputation.

Bell. Or as you did to day, when half afraid you snatch'd a kiss from *Araminta*.

Vain. She has made a quarrel on't.

Bell. Pauh, Women are only angry at such offences, to have the pleasure of forgiving 'em.

Vain. And I love to have the pleasure of making my peace — I should not esteem a Pardon if too easie won.

Bell. Thou dost not know what thou wouldst beat; whether thou wouldst have her angry or pleas'd. Couldst thou be content to marry *Araminta*?

Vain. Could you be content to go to Heaven?

Bell. Hum, not immediately, in my conscience not heartily? I'de do a little more good in my generation first, in order to deserve it.

Vain. Nor I to marry *Araminta* till I merit her.

Bell. But how the Devil dost thou expect to get her, if she never yield?

Vain. That's true; but I would —

Bell. Marry her without her content; thou'r't a Riddle beyond Woman —

Enter Setter.

Trusty *Setter* what tidings! how goes the project?

Setter. As all lewd projects do Sir, where the Devil prevents our endeavours with success.

Bell. A good hearing, *Setter*.

Vain. Well, I'll leave you with your Engineer.

Exit

Bell.

Bell. And hast thou provided necessaires?

Setter. All, all Sir; the large sanctified Hat, and the little precise Bapd, with a swinging long spiritual Cloak, to cover carnal Knavery — not forgetting the black Patch, which Tribulation Spin-text wears as I'm inform'd, upon one Eye, as a penal Mourning for the ogling, Offences of his Youth; and some say, with that Eye, he first discover'd the frailty of his Wife.

Bell. Well, in this Fanatick Fathers habit, will I confess *Latitia*.

Setter. Rather prepare her for Confession, Sir, by helping her to Sin.

Bell. Be at your Masters Lodging in the Evening I shall use the Robes. *Exit. Bell.*

Setter. I shall Sir — I wonder to which of these two Gentlemen I do most properly appertain — the one uses me as his Attendant, the other, being the better acquainted with my parts, employs me as a Pimp: why that's much the more honourable employment — by all means — I follow one as my Master, but the other follows me as his Conductor.

Enter Lucy.

Lucy. There's the Hang-dog his Man — I had a power over him in the Reign of my Mistress, but he is too true a *Valet de chambre* not to affect his Masters faults; and consequently is revolted from his Allegiance.

Setter. Undoubtedly 'tis impossible to be a Pimp and not a Man of parts. That is without being politic, diligent, secret, wary and so forth — And to all this valiant as *Hercules* — That is, passively valiant and actively obedient. Ah! Setter what a treasure is here lost for want of being known.

Lucy. Here's some Villany a Foot he's so thoughtful,

ful; may be I may discover something in my Mask
—Worthy Sir, a word with you.

[*Puts on her Mask.*]

Setter. Why if I were known, I might come to
be a great Man—

Lucy. Not to interrupt your mediation—

Setter. And I should not be the first that has procur'd his greatness by Pimping.

Lucy. Now Poverty and the Pox light upon thee,
for a Contemplative Pimp.

Setter. Ha! what art, who thus maliciously
hast awakned me from my Dream of Glory?
speak thou vile Disturber—

Lucy. Of thy most vile Cogitations— thou
poor, conceited wretch, how wer't thou valuing
thy self, upon thy Masters Employment. For
he's the head Pimp to Mr. *Bellmour*.

Setter. Good words, Damsel, or I shall—
But how dost thou know my Master or me?

Lucy. Yes, I know both Master and Man to be—

Setter. To be Men perhaps? nay faith like enough?
I often march in the rear of my Master,
and enter the breaches which he has made.

Lucy. Ay, the breach of Faith, which he has
begun: Thou Traytor to thy lawful Princess.

Setter. Why how now! prithee who art? lay
by that worldly Face and produce your natural Vizor.

Lucy. No Sirrah, I'll keep it on to abuse thee
and leave thee without hopes of revenge.

Setter. Oh! I begin to smoak ye, thou art some
forsaken *Abigail*, we have dallied with heretofore
—And art come to tickle thy imagination with
remembrance of iniquity past.

Lucy. No thou pittiful Flatterer of thy Masters
imperfections; thou Maukin made up of the Shreds
and Pairings of his superfluous Fopperies.

Setter. Thou art thy Mistresses foul self, come
pose

posed of her sullied iniquities and Cloathing.

Lucy. Hang thee — Beggars Curr — Thy Master is but a Mumper in Love ; lies canting at the Gate , but never dares presume to enter the House.

Setter. Thou art the Wicket to thy Mistriss's Gate, to be opened for all Comers. In fine thou art the high Road to thy Mistriss, as a Clap is to the Pox.

Lucy. Beast , filthy Toad , I can hold no longer ; look and tremble. [Unmasks.

Setter. How , *Mrs. Lucy* ?

Lucy. I wonder thou hast the impudence to look me in the Face.

Setter. Adsbud who's in fault , Mistriss of mine ? who flung the first Stone ? who undervalued my Function ? and who the Devil could know you by instinct ?

Lucy. You could know my Office by instinct , an be hang'd , which you have slander'd most abominably. It vexes me not what you said of my Person ; but that my innocent Calling should be expos'd and scandaliz'd — I cannot bear it. *Cries.*

Setter. Nay faith *Lucy* I'm sorry ; I'll own my self to blame , though we were both in fault as to our Offices — Come I'll make you any reparation.

Lucy. Swear.

Setter. I do swear to the utmost of my power.

Lucy. To be brief then ; what is the reason your Master did not appear to day according to the Summons I brought him ?

Set. To answer you as briefly , He has a Cause to be tried in another Court.

Lucy. Come tell me in plain Terms , how forward he is with *Araminta* ?

Setter. Too forward to be turn'd back — Though he's a little in disgrace at present about a Kiss which he forced. You and I can Kiss *Lucy* without all that.

Lucy. Stand off — He's a precious Jewel. *Set-*

Setter. And therefore you'd have him to set in your Ladies Locket.

Lucy. Where is he now?

Setter. He'll be in the *Piazza* presently.

Lucy. Remember to days behaviour. Let me see you with a penitent Face.

Setter. What no Token of amity *Lucy*? you and I don't use to part with dry Lips.

Lucy. No, no, avaunt — I'll not be slubber'd and kiss'd now — I'm not i'th' humour. [*Exit.*]

Setter. I'll not quit you so — I'll Follow and put you into the humour. [*Exit after her.*]

Enter Sir Joseph Wittoll, Bluffe.

Bluff. And so out of your unwonted Generosity —

Sir Jo. And good Nature, Back; I am good natur'd and I can't help it.

Bluff. You have given him a note upon *Fondlewife* for a hundred Pound.

Sir Jo. Ay, ay, poor Fellow he ventur'd fair for't.

Bluff. You have disoblig'd me in it — for I have occasion for the Mony; and if you would look me in the Face again and live, go, and force him, to redeliver you the Note; go and bring it me hither. I'll stay here for you.

Sir Jo. You may stay till the day of Judgment then, by the Lord *Harry* I know better things than to be run through the Guts for a hundred Pound — why I gave that hundred Pound for being saved, and d'ee think, an there were no danger, I'll be so ungrateful to take it from the Gentleman again?

Bluff. Well, go to him from me — Tell him, say, he must refund — or *Bilbo's* the Word, and Slaughter will ensue — If he refuse, tell him —

but

but whisper that ——— tell him — I'll pink his Soul — but whisper that softly to him.

Sir Jo. So softly, that he shall never hear on't I warrant you — why, what a Devil's matter, Busby, are you mad? or de'e think I'm mad? Agad for my part, I don't love to be the Messenger of ill News; 'tis an ungrateful Office — So tell him your self.

Bluff. By these Hilt I believe he frightened you into this composition; I believe you gave it him out of fear, pure paultry fear — confels.

Sir Jo. No, no, hang't I was not afraid neither — tho' I confels he did in a manner snap me up — yet I can't say that is was altogether out of fear, but partly to prevent mischief — for he was a devilish cholerick Fellow: And if my Choller had been up too, agad there would have been mischief done, that's flat. And yet I believe if you had been by, I would as soon have let him a' had a hundred of my Teeth. Ads heart if he should come just now when I'm angry, I'd tell him — Mum.

Enter Sharper, Bellmour.

Bell. Thou'rt a lucky Rogue; there's your Benefactor, you ought to return him Thanks now you have receiv'd the Favour.

Sharp. Sir Joseph --- Your Note was accepted, and the Money paid at sight: I'm come to return my Thanks —

Sir Jo. They won't be accepted, so readily as the Bill, Sir.

Bell. I doubt the Knight repents, Tom --- He looks like the Knight of the sorrowful Face.

Sharp. This is a double Generosity --- Do me a Kindness and refuse my Thanks --- But I hope you are not offended that I offer'd 'em?

Sir Jo. May be I am Sir, may be I am not Sir; may be I am both Sir; what then? I hope, I may be offended, without any offence to you Sir.

Sharp. Hey day! Captain, what's the matter? You can tell.

Bluff. Mr. *Sharper*, the matter is plain --- Sir *Joseph* has found out your Trick, and does not care to be put upon; being a Man of Honour.

Sharp. Trick, Sir?

Sir Jo. Ay Trick, Sir, and won't be put upon Sir, being a Man of Honour Sir, and so Sir ---

Sharp. Hearkee, Sir *Joseph* a word with ye --- In consideration of some favours lately received, I would not have you draw your self into a Premunire, by trusting to that sign of a Man there --- That Pot-gun charged with Wind.

Sir Jo. O Lord, O Lord, Captain, come justify your self --- I'll give him the Lie if you'll stand to it.

Sharp. Nay then I'll be before hand with you: take that --- Oase. (*Cuffs him.*)

Sir Jo. Captain, will you see this? Won't you pink his Soul?

Bluff. Hush! 'tis not so convenient now --- I shall find a time.

Sharp. What do you mutter about a time, Rascal --- You were the Incendiary --- There's to put you in mind of your time --- A Memorandum.

[*Kicks him.*]

Bluff. Oh this is your time Sir, you had best make use on't.

Sharp. I Gad and so I will: There's again for you.

[*Kicks him.*]

Bluff. You are obliging Sir, but this is too publick a Place to thank you in: But in your Ear, you are to be seen again?

Sharp. Ay thou inimitable Coward, and to be felt

felt — As for Example.

[Kicks him.

Bell. Ha, ha, ha, prithee come away, 'tis scandalous to kick this Puppy, without a Man were cold, and had no other way to get himself a heat.

[Ex. Bell. Sharp.

Bluff. Very well — Very fine — But 'tis no matter — Is not this fine, Sir Joseph?

Sir Jo. Indifferent, agad in my opinion, very indifferent — I'd rather go plain all my Life, than wear such Finery.

Bluff. Death and Hell to be affronted thus! I'll die before I'll suffer it.

[draws.

Sir Jo. O Lord, his anger was not raised before — Nay, dear Captain, don't be in Passion now, he's gone — Put up, put up, dear Back; 'tis your Sir Joseph begs; come let me kiss thee; so, so, put up, put up.

Bluff. By Heav'n 'tis not to be put up.

Sir Jo. What, Bully?

Bluff. The Affront.

Sir Jo. No agad no more 'tis, for that's put up already; thy Sword I mean.

Bluff. Well, Sir Joseph, at your entreaty — But were not you my Friend, abus'd, and cufft, and kickt?

[Putting up his Sword.

Sir Jo. Ay, ay, so were you too; no matter, 'tis past.

Bluff. By the immortal Thunder of great Guns, 'tis false — He sucks not vital Air who dares affront it to this Face.

[Looks big.

Sir Jo. To that Face I grant you Captain — No, no, I grant you — Not to that Face by the Lord Harry — If you had put on your fighting face before, you had done his business — He durst soon have kiss't you, as kickt you to your Face — But a man can no more help what's done be-

D

hind

hind his back, than what's said — Come we'll
think no more of what's past.

Bluff. I'll call a Council of War within, to con-
sider of my Revenge to come.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE *Changes to Silvia's Lodgings.*

Enter Heartwel, Silvia.

S O N G

I.

*As Amoret and Thyrsis, lay
Melting the Hours, in gentle Play;
Joining Faces, mingling Kisses,
And exchanging harmless Blissess:
He trembling, cry'd, with eager haste,
O let me feed as well as taste,
I die, if I'm not wholly blest.*

II

*The fearful Nymph reply'd — Forbear;
I cannot, dare not, must not hear:
Dearest Thyrsis, do not move me,
Do not — do not — if you Love me.
O let me — still the Shepherd said;
But while she fond Resistance made,
The hasty Joy, in struggling fled.*

III.

*Vex'd at the Pleasure she had mist,
She frown'd and blusht, then sigh'd and kist,
And seem'd to mean in sullen Cooing,
The sad miscarriage of their Wooing:*

The Old Batchelour.

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But vain alas! were all her Charms;
For Thyrfis deaf to Loves allaims;
Baffled and senseless, tir'd her Arms:

}

After the Song, a Dance of Anticks.

Silv. Indeed it is very fine — I could look upon 'em all day.

Heart. Well has this prevail'd for me? and will you look upon me?

Silv. If you could sing and dance so, I should love to look upon you too.

Heart. Why 'twas I sung and danc'd; I gave Musick to the Voice, and Life to their Measures — Look you here *Silvia*, here are Songs and Dances, Poetry and Musick — hark! how sweetly one Guinea rhymes to another — And how they dance to the Musick of their own Chink. This buys all the t'other — And this thou shalt have; this and all that I am worth for the purchase of thy love — Say, is it mine then, ha? Speak Syren — Dons why do I look on her? Yet I must — Speak dear Angel, Devil, Saint, Witch; do not rack me with Suspence?

Silv. Nay don't stare at me so — You make me dumb — I cannot look.

Heart. Oh Manhood, where art thou! What am I come to? A Womans Toy; at these years! Methinks, a bearded Baby for a Girl to dandle. O Rage, dotage! That ever that noble Passion, should ebb to this degree — No reflux of virginal Blood: But milky Love, supplies the empty Channels; and prompts me to the softness of a Child — A meer Infant and would suck. Can I love me *Silvia*? speak.

Silv. I dare not speak till I believe you; and indeed I'm afraid to believe you yet.

D 2

Heart.

Heart. Pox, how her Innocence torments and pleases me! Lying, Child, is indeed the Art of Love; and Men are generally Masters in it; but I'm so newly entred, you cannot distrust me of any skill in the treacherous Mystery --- Now by my Soul I cannot lie, though it were to serve a Friend or gain a Mistress.

Silv. Must you lie then, if you say you Love me?

Heart. No, no, dear Ignorance, thou beautiful Changeling --- I tell thee I do love thee, and tell it for a Truth, a naked Truth, which I'm ashamed to discover.

Silv. But Love, they say, is a tender thing that will smooth Frowns, and make calm an angry Face; will soften a rugged Temper, and make ill-humoured People good: You look ready to fright one, and talk as if your Passion were not Love, but Anger.

Heart. 'Tis both; for I am angry with myself, when I am pleased with you --- And a Poison upon me for loving thee so well --- Yet I must --- 'Tis a bearded Arrow, and will more easily thrust forward than drawn back.

Silv. Indeed if I were well assur'd you lov'd, but how can I be well assur'd?

Heart. Take the Symptoms --- And ask all the Tyrants of thy Sex, if their Fools are not known by this Party-coloured Livery --- I am Melancholy when thou art absent, look like an Ais when thou art present, wake for you when I should sleep, and even dream of you when I am awake; sigh much, drink little, eat less, court solitude, am grown very entertaining to my self, (as I am informed) very troublesome to every body else. If this be not Love, it is Madness, then it is pardonable --- Nay yet a more certain sign than all this, I give thee my Money.

Silv. Ay, but that is no sign, for they say, Gentlemen will give Mony to any naughty Woman to come to bed to them--- O *Gemini*, I hope you don't mean so--- for I won't be a Whore.

Heart. The more is the pity. [*Aside.*

Silv. Nay, if you would marry me, you should not come to bed to me--- You have such a Beard, and would so prickle one. But do you intend to marry me?

Heart. That a Fool should ask such a malicious Question! Death I, shall be drawn in, before I know where I am--- However, I find I am pretty sure of her consent, if I am put to it. [*Aside.* marry you! no, no, I'll love you.

Silv. Nay, but if you love me, you must marry me; what, don't I know my Father lov'd my Mother, and was married to her?

Heart. Ay, ay, in old days People married where they lov'd; but that fashion is chang'd, Child.

Silv. Never tell me that, I know it is not chang'd, by my self; for I love you, and would marry you.

Heart. I'll have my Beard shav'd, it shan't hurt thee, and well go to Bed---

Silv. No, no, I'm not such a Fool neither but I can keep my self--- honest--- Here, I won't keep any thing that's yours, I hate you now, [*Throws the Purse.*] and I'll never see you again, because you'd have me naught. [*Going.*

Heart. Damn her let her go, and a good rid-
dance--- Yet so much Tendernefs and Beauty--- and
Honesty together is a Jewel--- Stay *Silvia*! But then
to marry--- Why every Man plays the Fool once
in his Life: But to marry, is playing the Fool all
ones Life long.

Silv. What did you call me for?

Heart. I'll give thee all I have ; and thou shalt live with me in every thing so like my Wife , the World shall believe it : Nay , thou shalt think so thy self — Only let me not think so.

Silv. No , I'll die before I'll be your Whore — as well as I love you.

Heart. *Aside*] A Woman , and Ignorant , may be honest , when 'tis out of Obstinacy and Contradiction — But S'death it is but a may be , and upon scurvy Terms — Well , farewell then — if I can get out of sight , I may get the better of my self.

Silv. Well — good buy. [*Turns and Weeps.*

Heart. Ha ! Nay come , we'll kiss at parting [*kisses her*] By Heaven she kisses sweeter than Liberty — I will marry thee — There thou hast don't , all my Resolve melted in that Kiss — one more.

Silv. But when ?

Heart. I'm impatient till it be done ; I will not give my self liberty to think , lest I should cool — I will about a Licence straight — in the Evening expect me — One kiss more to confirm me mad ; so ! [*Exit.*

Silv. Ha , ha , ha , an old Fox trap —

Enter Lucy.

Bless me ! you frightened me ; I thought he had been come again , and had heard me.

Lucy. Lord , Madam , I met your Lover in as much haste , as if he had been going for a Midwife.

Silv. He's going for a Parson , Girl , the fore-runner of a Midwife , some nine months hence — Well , I find dissembling to our Sex is as natural as swimming to a *Negro* ; we may depend upon

The Old Batchelour.

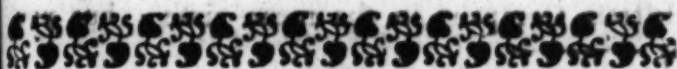
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pon our skill to save us at a plunge, tho till then
we never make the experiment — But how hast
thou succeeded?

Lucy. As you would wish — Since there is no
reclaiming *Vainlove*, I have found out a picque she
has taken at him; and have fram'd a Letter, that
makes her sue for reconciliation first. I know that
will do — walk in and I'll shew it you. Come
Madam, you're like to have a happy time on't,
both your Love and Anger satisfied! — All that
can charm our Sex conspire to please you.

*That Woman sure enjoys a blessed Night,
Whom Love and Vengeance do at once delight.*

Exeunt.



A C T. I V.

S C E N E I. *The Street.*

Enter Bellmour in Fanatick Habit, Setter.

Bellmour.

TIs pretty near the Hour. [*Looking on his Watch*]
Well and how *Setter*, ha, does my Hypocrisy
sit me, ha? Does it sit easy on me?

Sett. O most religiously well, Sir.

Bell. I wonder why all our young Fellows should
glory in an opinion of Atheism, when they may
be so much more conveniently lewd under the Co-
verlet of Religion.

Sett. S'bud Sir, away quickly, there's *Fendlewise*,
just turn'd the Corner, and's coming this way.

D 4

Bell.

Bell. Gads so, there he is, he must not see me.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter Fondlewife and Barnaby.

Fond. I say, I will tarry at home.

Bar. But, Sir.

Fond. Good lack! I profess the Spirit of contradiction hath possess'd the Lad — I say I will tarry at home — *Varlet.*

Bar. I have done Sir, then farewell 500. pound.

Fond. Ha, how's that? Stay, stay, did you leave word say you with his Wife? With *Comfort* her self.

Bar. I did; and *Comfort* will send *Tribulation* hither as soon as ever he comes home — I could have brought young Mr. *Prig*, to have kept my Mistress Company in the mean time; but you say —

Fond. How, how, say *Varlet*! I say let him not come near my Doors. I say, he is a wanton young *Levite*, and pampereth himself up with Dainties, that he may look lovely in the Eyes of Women — Sincerely I am afraid he hath already defiled the Tabernacle of our Sister *Comfort*; while her good Husband is deluded by his Godly appearance --- I say, that even Lust doth sparkle in his Eyes, and glow upon his Cheeks, and that I would as soon trust my Wife with a Lords high-fed Chaplain.

Bar. Sir, the Hour draws nigh --- And nothing will be done there till you come.

Fond. And nothing can be done here till I go -- So that I'll tarry, d'ce see.

Bar. And run the hazard to lose your affair so!

Fond. Good lack, good lack --- I profess it is a very sufficient vexation, for a Man to have a handsome Wife,

Bar.

Bar. Never, Sir, but when the Man is an insufficient Husband. 'Tis then indeed, like the vanity of taking a fine House, and yet be forced to let Lodgings, to help pay the Rent.

Fond. I profess a very apt Comparison, *Varlet.* Go in and bid my Cocky come out to me, I will give her some instructions, I will reason with her before I go. [*Exit Barnaby.*] And in the mean time, I will reason with my self. -- Tell me *Isaac*, why art th' Jealous? Why art thee distrustful of the Wife of thy Bosom? --- Because she is young and vigorous, and I am old and impotent --- Then why didst thee marry *Isaac*? --- Because she was beautiful and tempting, and because I was obstinate and doating; so that my inclination was, and is still, greater than my power --- And will not that which tempted thee, also tempt others, who will tempt her *Isaac*? --- I fear it much --- But does not thy Wife love thee, nay doat upon thee? --- Yes --- Why then! --- Ay, but to say truth, she's fonder of me, than she has reason to be; and in the way of Trade, we still suspect the smootheest Dealers of the deepest designs --- And that she has some designs deeper than thou canst reach, th' hast experimented *Isaac* --- But Mum.

Enter Lætitia.

Lat. I hope my dearest Jewel is not going to leave me --- Are you *Nykin*?

Fond. Wife --- Have you thoroughly consider'd how detestable, how heinous, and how crying a Sin, the Sin of Adultery is? Have you weigh'd it? For it is a very weighty Sin; and although it may lie heavy upon thee, yet thy Husband must also bear his part: For thy iniquity will fall upon his Head.

Lat. Bless me, what means my Dear?

D 5

Fond.

Fond. *Aside*) I profess she has an alluring Eye; I am doubtful, whether I shall trust her, even with Tribulation himself---Speak, I say, have you considered, what it is to Cuckold your Husband?

Let. *Aside*) I'm amazed: sure he has discovered nothing---Who has wrong'd me to my Dearest? I hope my Jewel does not think, that ever I had any such thing in my Head, or ever will have?

Fond. No, no, I tell you I shall have it in my Head---You will have it somewhere else.

Let. *Aside*) I know not what to think. But I'm resolv'd to find the meaning of it---Unkind Dear! Was it for this you sent to call me? is it not affliction enough that you are to leave me, but you must study to encrease it by unjust suspicions? [*Crying*] Well--Well--You know my Fondness, and you love to Tyrannize---Go on cruel Man, do, Triumph over my poor Heart, while it holds; which cannot be long, with this usage of yours---But that's what you want---Well---You will have your ends soon---You will---You will---Yes it will break to oblige you. (*Sighs.*)

Fond. Verily I fear I have carried the Jest too far---Nay, look you now if she does not weep---'tis the fondest Fool---Nay, Cocky, Cocky, nay, dear Cocky, don't cry, I was but in Jest, I was not ifeek.

Let. *Aside*) Oh then all's safe. I was terribly frightened---My affliction is always your Jest, barbarous Man! Oh that I should love to this degree! Yet---

Fond. Nay, Cocky.

Let. No, no, you are weary of me, that's it---that's all, you would get another Wife---fond Fool, to break her heart---well, be as cruel as you can to me, I'll pray for you; and when I am dead with grief, may you have one that will love you

you as well as I have done : I shall be contented to lie at peace in my cold Grave—since it will please you. [Sighs.

Fond. Good lack , good lack , she would melt a heart of Oak — I profess I can hold no longer — Nay dear Cocky — I feck you'll break my heart — I feck you will — See you have made me weep — Made poor Nykin weep ——— Nay come Kifs , buss poor Nyken — and I won't leave thee — I'll lose all first.

Lat. *Aside*) How ! Heav'n forbid ! that will be carrying the Jest too far indeed.

Fond. Won't you kifs Nykin ?

Lat. Go naughty Nykin , you don't love me.

Fond. Kifs , kifs , ifeck I do.

Lat. No you don't. [She kisses him.

Fond. What not love Cocky !

Lat. No — h. [Sighs.

Fond. I profess I do love thee better than 500. Pound — And so thou shalt say , for I'll leave it to stay with thee.

Lat. No you shan't neglect your business for me — No indeed you sant Nykin — If you don't go , I'll think you been dealous of me still.

Fond. He , he , he , wilt thou poor Fool ? Then I will go , I won't be dealous — Poor Cocky , kifs Nykin , kifs Nykin , ee , ee , ee --- Here will be the good Man anon , to talk to Cocky and teach her how a Wife ought to behave her self.

Lat. (*Aside*.) I hope to have one that will shew me how a Husband ought to behave himself --- I shall be glad to learn , to please my Jewel. [Kifs.

Fond. That's my good Dear --- Come kifs Nykin --- more , and then get you in --- So --- Get you , get you in. By , by.

Lat. By , Nykin.

Fond. By , Cocky.

Lat.

Lat. By , Nykin.

[She goes in.

Fond. By , Cocky , by , by.

[Exit.

Enter Vainlove, Sharper

Sharp. How ! *Araminta* lost !

Vain. To confirm what I have said , read this

[Gives a Letter.

Sharp. Reads) *Ham , hum --- And what then appear'd a fault , upon reflection , seems only an effect of a too powerful Passion. I'm afraid I give too great a Proof of my own at this time --- I am in disorder for what I have written ; but something , I know not what , forced me. I only beg a favourable Censure of this and your.*

Araminta

Sharp. Lost ! Pray Heaven thou hast not lost thy Wits ; Here , here , she's thy own Man , sign'd and seal'd too --- To her Man --- A delicious Melon pure and consenting ripe , and only waits thy cutting up --- She has been breeding Love to thee all this while , and just now she's deliver'd of it.

Vain. 'Tis an untimely Fruit , and she has miscarried of her Love.

Sharp. Wilt thou never leave this damn'd , ill-natur'd whimsey , *Frank* ? Thou hast a sickly peevish Appetite ; only to chew Love and cannot digest it :

Vain. Yes , when I feed my self --- But I hate to be cramm'd --- By Heav'n there's not a Woman will give a Man the pleasure of a chase : My sport is always balkt or cut short --- I stumble over the Game I would pursue --- 'Tis dull and unnatural to have a Hare run full in the Hounds Mouth and would distaste the keenest Hunter --- I would have overtaken , not have met my Game.

Sharp. However I hope you don't mean to forsake it ? that will be but a kind of a Mungril Cur trick. Well , are you for the Mall ?

Vain

The Old Batchelour.

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Vain. No, she will be there this evening-- Yes--
I will go too --- And she shall see her error in ---

Sharp. In her choice I gad --- But thou canst
not be so great a Brute as to slight her.

Vain. I should disappoint her if I did not --
By her management I should think she expects it.

All naturally fly what does pursue :

'Tis fit Men should be coy, when Women wooe.

Exeunt.

SCENE *Changes to a Room in Fondle-
wife's House.*

*A Servant introducing Bellmour in Fanatick
Habit, with a Patch upon one Eye
and a Book in his Hand.*

Servant.

Here's a Chair, Sir, if you please to repose
your self. I'll call my Mistress. [*Exit. Servant.*

Bell. Secure in my Disguise, I have out-fac'd
Suspicion, and even dar'd Discovery --- This Cloak
my Sanctity, and trusty *Scarron's* Novels my Pra-
yer-Book --- Methinks I am the very Picture of
Montufar in the *Hypocrites* --- Oh! she comes.

Enter Lætitia

*Sobreaks Aurora through the Veil of Night, } Throwing off
Thus fly the Clouds, divided by her Light, } his Cloak,
And every Eye receives a new-born Sight. } Patch, &c.*

Lat. Thus strew'd with blushes, like --- Ah! Heav'n
defend me! Who's this? [*Discovering him, starts.*

Bell. Your Lover.

Lat.

Lat. *Vainlove's* Friend ! I know his Face ; and he has betray'd me to, him [*Aside.*

Bell. You are surpris'd. Did you not expect a Lover, Madam ! Those Eyes shone kindly on my first Appearance, tho now they are o'er-cast.

Lat. I may well be surpriz'd at your Person and Impudence ; they are both new to me --- You are not what your first Appearance promised : The Piety of your Habit was welcome, but not the Hypocrisy.

Bell. Rather the Hypocrisy was welcome, but not the Hypocrite. [*Aside.*

Lat. Who are you, Sir ? You have mistaken the House sure.

Bell. I have Directions in my Pocket, which agree with every thing but your unkindness.

[*Pulls out the Letter.*

Lat. My Letter ! Base *Vainlove* ! Then 't's too late to dissemble. [*Aside.*

'Tis plain then you have mist the Person. [*Going.*

Bell. If we part so I'm mistaken --- Hold, hold, Madam --- I confess I have run into an Errour --- I beg your Pardon a thousand times --- What an eternal Block-head am I ! Can you forgive me the Disorder I have put you into --- But it is a Mistake which any body might have made.

Lat. What can this mean ! 'Tis impossible he should be mistaken after all this --- A handsome Fellow if he had not surpriz'd me ; Methinks, now I look on him again, I would not have him mistaken. [*Aside.*] We are all liable to Mistakes, Sir : If you own it to be so, there needs no farther Apology.

Bell. Nay 'Faith, Madam 'tis a pleasant one ; and worth your hearing. Expecting a Friend, last Night, at his Lodgings, till 'twas late ; my intimacy with him gave me the Freedom of his Bed ;

He

He not coming home all Night, a Letter was deliver'd to me by a Servant, in the Morning: Upon the perusal I found the Contents so Charming, that I could think of nothing all Day, but putting 'em in practice — till just now, (the first time I ever look'd upon the Superfcription) I am the most surpriz'd in the world to find it directed to Mr. *Vainlove*. Gad, Madam, I ask you a Million of Pardons, and will make you any Satisfaction.

Let. I am discover'd — And either *Vainlove* is not guilty, or he has handsomely excus'd him
[*Aside.*

Bell. You appear concern'd, Madam?

Let. I hope you are a Gentleman; — and since you are privy to a weak Woman's failing, won't turn it to the prejudice of her Reputation. You look as if you had more Honour —

Bell. And more Love; or my Face is a False Witness, and deserves to be pillory'd. — No, by Heaven, I swear —

Let. Nay, don't swear, if you'd have me believe you; but promise —

Bell. Well, I promise — A Promise is so cold — Give me leave to swear — by those Eyes, those killing Eyes; by those healing Lips. — Oh I press the soft Charm close to mine, — and seal 'em up for ever.

Let. Upon that Condition. [*He kisses her.*

Bell. Eternity was in that moment — One more, upon any Condition.

Let. Nay now — I never saw any thing so agreeably Impudent.

[*Aside.*
Don't you censure me for this, now? — but 'tis to buy your Silence.

[*Kiss.*
h, but what am I doing?

Bell. Doing! No Tongue can express it — not my own; nor any thing, but thy Lips. I am faint with

with the Excess of Bliss: Oh, for Lovesake, lead me any wither, where I may lie down; — quickly, for I'm afraid I shall have a Fit.

Let. Bless me! What Fit?

Bell. Oh, a Convulsion — I feel the Symptoms.

Let. Does it hold you long? I'm afraid to carry you into my Chamber.

Bell. Oh, No: Let me lie down upon the Bed; — the Fit will be soon over. [*Exeunt*]

SCENE changes to St. James's Park.

Araminta and Belinda meeting.

Belinda.

Lard, my Dear: I am glad I have met you — I have been at the *Exchange* since, and am so tir'd...

Aram. Why, What's the matter?

Belin. Oh the most inhumane, barbarous Hackney-Coach! I am jolted to a Jelly — Am I not horribly touz'd? [*Pulls out a Pocket-Glass.*]

Aram. Your Head's a little out of Order.

Belin. A little! O frightful! What a furious Fizz have! O most rueful! Ha, ha, ha: O Gad, I hope no body will come this way, till I put myself a little in Repair — Ah! my Dear — I have seen such unhewn Creatures since — Ha, ha, ha, I can't for my Soul help thinking that I look just like one of 'em — Good Dear, pin this, and I'll tell you — Very well — So, thank you my Dear — But as I was telling you — Pish, this is the untoward'st Lock — So, as I was telling you — How d'ye like me now? Hideous, ha? Frightful still? Or how?

Aram. No, no; you're very well as can be.

Belin. And so — But where did I leave off, my Dear? I was telling you —

Aram.

Aram. You were about to tell me something;
Child — but you left off before you began.

Belin. Oh! a most Comical Sight: A Country
Squire, with the Equipage of a Wife and two
Daughters, came to Mrs. *Snipwel's* Shop while I
was there --- But, Oh Gad! Two such unlick'd
Cubs!

Aram. I warrant, plump, Cherry-check'd
Country Girls.

Bell. Ay, O my Conscience, far as Barn-door-
Fowl: But so bedeck'd, you would have taken 'em
for *Friezland* Hens, with their Feathers growing
the wrong way --- O such Out-landish Creatures!
Such *Tramontane*, and Foreigners to the Fashion,
or any thing in practice! I had not patience to be-
hold --- I undertook the modelling of one of their
Fronts, the more modern Structure ---

Aram. Bless me, Cousin; why would you af-
front any body so? They might be Gentlewomen
of a very good Family ---

Belin. Of a very ancient one, I dare swear, by
their Dress --- Affront! Plhaw, how you're mista-
ken! The poor Creature, I warrant, was as full
of Curtsies, as if I had been her Godmother. The
Truth on't is, I did endeavour to make her look
like a Christian --- and she was sensible of it; for
she thank'd me, and gave me two Apples, pip-
ing hot, out of her Under-Petticoat-Pocket ---
Ha, ha, ha: And t'other did so stare and gape ---
fancied her like the Front of her Father's Hall;
her Eyes were the two Jut-Windows, and her
Mouth the great Door, most hospitably kept open,
for the Entertainment of travelling Flies.

Aram. So then, you have been diverted. What
did they buy?

Belin. Why the Father bought a Powder-Horn,
and an Almanack, and a Comb-Case; the Mother,

a great Friz-Towr, and a Fat-Amber-Necklace;
The Daughters only tore two pair of Kid Gloves,
with trying 'em on --- Oh Gad, here comes the
Fool that din'd at my Lady *Freelove's* t'other day.

Enter Sir Joseph and Bluffe.

Aram. May be he may not know us again.

Belin. We'll put on our Masks to secure his
Ignorance. [*They put on their Masks.*]

Sir Jos. Nay, gad, I'll pick up; I'm resolv'd
to make a Night on't --- I'll go to Alderman *Fondle-*
wife by and by, and get Fifty Pieces more from him.
Adflidikins, *Bully*, we'll wallow in Wine and
Women. Why, this same *Madera*-Wine has
made me as light as a Grashopper --- Hift, hift,
Bully, dost thou see those Tearers? [*Sings.*] Look
you what here is --- Look you what here is --- Toll ---
loll --- dera --- toll --- loll --- A Gad, t'other Glass of
Madera, and I durst have attack'd 'em in my own
proper Person, without your help.

Bluffe. Come on then, Knight --- But d'ye know
what to say to 'em?

Sir Jos. Say: Pooh, Pox, I've enough to say ---
never fear it --- that is, if I can but think on't.
Truth is, I have but a treacherous Memory.

Belin. O frightful! Cousin, What shall we do
These things come toward us.

Aram. No matter --- I see *Vainlove* coming this
way --- and, to confess my Failing, I am willing
to give him an opportunity of making his Peace
with me --- and to rid me of these Coxcombs,
when I seem oppress'd with 'em, will be a fair one.

Bluffe. Ladies, by these Hilts you are well met.

Aram. We are afraid not.

Bluffe. What says my pretty little Knapfack Car-
rier? [*To Belinda*]

Belin.

Belin. O monstrous filthy Fellow! Good slovenly Captain *Huffe*, *Bluffe*, (what's your hideous name?) be gone: You stink of Brandy and Tobacco, most Soldier-like. Foh.

[*Spits.*]

Sir Jos. Now am I slap-dash down in the Mouth, and have not one Word to say!

[*Aside.*]

Aram. I hope my Fool has not Confidence enough to be troublesome.

[*Aside.*]

Sir Jos. Hem! Pray, Madam, which way's the Wind?

Aram. A pithy Question — Have you sent your Wits for a Venture, Sir, that you enquire?

Sir Jos. Nay, now I'm in — I can prattle like a Magpye.

[*Aside.*]

Enter Sharper and Vainlove at a Distance.

Belin. Dear *Araminta*, I'm tir'd.

Aram. 'Tis but pulling off our Masks, and obliging *Vainlove* to know us; I'll be rid of my Fool by fair means — Well, *Sir Joseph*, you shall see my Face — but be gone immediately — I see one that will be Jealous, to find me in discourse with you — Be discreet — No reply, but away.

[*Unmasks.*]

Sir Jos. The great Fortune, that dined at my Lady *Freelove's*! *Sir Joseph*, thou art a Madman. Gad, I'm in Love, up to the Ears. But I'll be discreet, and hush.

[*Aside.*]

Bluffe. Nay, by the World, I'll see your face.

Belin. You shall.

[*Unmasks.*]

Sharpe. Ladies, your humble Servant. — We are afraid, you would not have given us leave to know you.

Aram. We thought to have been private. — We find Fools, have the same advantage over us in a Mask, that a Coward has, while the

Sword is in the Schabbard—So were forced to draw in our own defence.

Bluffe. My blood rises at that Fellow: I can't stay where he is; and I must not draw in the Park.

[*To Sir Jos.*

Sir Jos. I wish I durst stay to let her know my Lodging. — [Exit *Sir Jos. and Bluffe.*

Sharp. There is in true Beauty, as in Courage, somewhat which narrow Souls cannot dare to admire. — And see, the Owls are fled, as at the break of Day.

Belind. Very courtly. — I believe, Mr. *Vainlove* has not rubb'd his Eyes, since break of Day neither, he looks as if he durst not approach — Nay, come Cousin, be friends with him — I swear he looks so very simply, ha, ha, ha. — Well, a Lover in the state of separation from his Mistress is like a Body without a Soul. Mr. *Vainlove*, shall I be bound for your good Behaviour for the future?

Vain. Now must I pretend ignorance equal to hers, of what she knows as well as I. [*Aside* Men are apt to offend ('tis true), where they find most Goodness to forgive — But, Madam, hope I shall prove of a Temper, not to abuse Mercy by committing new Offences.

Aram. So cold!

[*Aside*

Belin. I have broke the ice for you, Mr. *Vainlove*, and so leave you. Come, Mr. *Sharper*, you and I will take a turn, and laugh at the Vulgar. Both the great Vulgar and the small — Oh God! I have a great passion for *Cowley*. — Don't you admire him?

Sharp. Oh Madam! He was our English Homer.

Belin. Ah so fine! So extremely fine! So everything in the world that I like. — Oh Lord, what this way — I see a couple, I'll give you their History.

[*Ex. Bel. and Sharp.*

Vain. I find, Madam, the Formality of the Law must be observ'd, tho the Penalty of it be dispens'd with; and an Offender must Plead to his Araignment, tho he have his Pardon in his Pocket.

Aram. I'm amaz'd! This insolence exceeds the other; — whoever has encourag'd you to this assurance — presuming upon the easiness of my Temper, has much deceiv'd you and so you shall find.

Vain. Hey day! Which way now? Here's fine doubling. [Aside.

Aram. Base Man! Was is not enough to affront me with your sawcy Passion?

Vain. You have given that Passion a much kinder Epithet than Sawcy, in another place.

Aram. Another place! Some villainous Design to blast my Honour — But tho thou hadst all the Treachery and Malice of thy Sex, thou canst not lay a blemish on my Fame — No, I have not err'd in one favourable Thought of Mankind — How time might have deceiv'd me in you, I know not; my opinion was but young, and your early baseness has prevented its growing to a wrong Belief — Unworthy, and ungrateful! Be gone, and never see me more.

Vain. Did I dream? Or do I dream? Shall I believe my Eyes, or Ears? The Vision is here still — Your Passion, Madam, will admit of no farther reasoning — But here is a silent Witness of your acquaintance —

[Takes out the Letter, and offers it: She snatches it, and throws it away.

Aram. There's Poison in every thing you touch — Blisters will follow —

Vain. That Tongue, which denies what the Hands have done —

Aram. Still mystically senseless and impudent:

I find I must leave the place.

Vain. No, Madam, I'm gone--- She knows her Name's to it, which she will be unwilling to expose to the Censure of the first finder. [Exit.

Aram. Woman's Obstinacy made me blind, to what Woman's Curiosity now tempts me to see.

[Takes up the Letter, and Exit.

Enter Belinda, Sharper.

Belin. Nay, we have spared no body, I swear. Mr. *Sharper*, you're a pure Man; where did you get this excellent Talent of Railing?

Sharp. Faith, Madam, the Talent was born with me: I confess, I have taken care to improve it; to qualify me for the Society of Ladies.

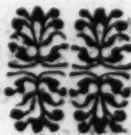
Belin. Nay, sure Railing is the best qualification in a Woman's Man.

Sharp. The second best, — indeed I think.

Enter Footman.

Belin. How now, *Pace*? Where's my Cousin *Foot*. She's not very well, Madam, and has sent to know, if your Ladiship would have the Coach come again for you?

Belin. O Lord, No, I'll go along with her. Come, Mr. *Sharper*. [Exit.



The Old Batchelour.

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SCENE *Changes to a Chamber in Fondlewife's House.*

Enter Lætitia and Bellmour, his Cloak, Hat, &c. lying loose about the Chamber.

Bellmour.

Here's no body, nor no noise; — 'twas nothing but your fears.

Lat. I durst have sworn, I had heard my Monster's Voice — I swear, I was heartily frightened — Feel how my heart beats.

Bell. 'Tis an alarm to Love — Come in again, and let us —

Fond. *without.* Cocky, Cocky, where are you, Cocky? I'm come home.

Lat. Ah! There he is. Make haste, gather up your things.

Fond. Cocky, Cocky, open the door.

Bell. Pox choak him; would his Horns were in his Throat. My Patch, my Patch.

[*Looking about, and gathering up his things.*

Lat. My Jewel, art thou there? No matter for your Patch — You s'ant tum in, Nykin — Run into my Chamber, quickly, quickly, You s'an't tum in.

[*Bell. goes in.*

Fond. Nay, prithee, Dear, ifeek I'm in haste.

Lat. Then I'll let you in. [*Opens the Door.*

Enter Fondlewife, and Sir Joseph.

Fond. Kifs, Dear — I met the Master of the ship by the way — And I must have my Papers of account out of your Cabinet.

Lat. Oh, I'm undone! [*Aside.*

Sir Jo. Pray, first let me have 50 l. good Alderman, for I'm in haste.

Fond. A hundred has already been paid, by your Order. Fifty! I have the Sum ready in Gold, in my Closet. *[Goes into his Closet.]*

Sir Jo. Agad, it's a curious, fine, pretty Rogue; I'll speak to her — Pray, Madam, what News d'ye hear?

Lat. Sir, I seldom stir abroad.

[Walks about in disorder.]

Sir Jo. I wonder at that, Madam, for 'tis most curious fine weather.

Lat. Methinks, 't has been very ill weather.

Sir Jo. As you say, Madam, 'tis pretty bad weather, and has been so a great while.

[Enter Fondle-wife]

Fond. Here are fifty pieces in this Purse, Sir Joseph — If you will tarry a moment, till I fetch my Papers, I'll wait upon you down Stairs.

Lat. Ruin'd, past Redemption! What shall I do — Ha! *[As Fond. is going in this fool may be of use. [Aside] to the Chamber, [he Stand off, rude Ruffian. Help runs to Sir Joseph me, my Dear — O bless me! almost pushes him Why will you leave me alone! down, and cries out. with such a Saryr.]*

Fond. Bless us! what's the matter? what's the matter?

Lat. Your back was no sooner turn'd; but like a Lion, he came open mouth'd upon me, and would have ravished a kiss from me by main force.

Sir Jo. O Lord! Oh terrible! Ha, ha, ha, is your Wife mad, Alderman?

Lat. Oh! I am sick with the fright; won't you take him out of my sight?

[Fond.]

Fond. Oh Traytor! I'm astonished. Oh bloody-minded Traytor!

Sir Jo. Hey-day! Traytor your self—By the Lord Harry I was in most danger of being ravish'd, if you go to that.

Fond. Oh, how the blasphemous wretch swears! Out of my house, thou Son of the whore of Babylon; Offspring of Bell and the Dragon—Bless us! Ravish my Wife! my Dinah! Oh Schechemite! Be gone I say.

Sir Jo. Why, the Devil's in the people, I think.

[Exit.

Lat. Oh! won't you follow, and see him out of Doors, my Dear?

Fond. I'll shut this door, to secure him from coming back—Give me the Key of your Cabinet, Cocky—Ravish my Wife before my face! I warrant he's a Papist in his heart, at least, if not a French man.

Lat. What can I do now! (*Aside.*) Oh! my Dear, I have been in such a fright, that I forgot to tell you, poor Mr. Spintext, has a sad Fit of the Cholick, and is forced to lie down upon our bed—You'll disturb him; I can tread sofilier.

Fond. Alack poor Man—No, no—you don't know the Papers—I won't disturb him; Give me the Key. (*She gives him the Key, goes to the Chamber door, and speaks aloud.*)

Lat. 'Tis no body but Mr. Fondlewife, Mr. Spintext, lie still on your Stomach; lying on your Stomach, will ease you of the Cholick.

Fond. Ay, ay, lie still, lie still; don't let me disturb you.

[Goes in.

Lat. Sure, when he does not see his face, he won't discover him. Dear Fortune, help me but this once, and I'll never run in thy debt again—But this Opportunity is the Devil,

Fondlewife returns with Papers.

Fond. Good lack ! good lack ! — I profess, the poor Man is in great torment, he lies as flat — Dear, you should heat a Trencher, or a Napkin — Where's *Deborah* ? let her clap a warm thing to his Stomach, or chafe it with a warm hand, rather than fail. What Book's this ?

[*Sees the Book that Bellmour forgot.*

Lat. Mr. *Spinext*'s Prayer-book, Dear — Pray Heav'n it be a Prayer-book. [*Aside.*

Fond. Good Man ! I warrant he dropp'd it on purpose, that you might take it up, and read some of the pious Ejaculations. [*Taking up the Book*] O bless me ! O monstrous ! A Prayer-book ? Ay, this is the Devil's *Pater-Noster*. Hold, let me see ; *The Innocent Adultery*.

Lat. Misfortune ! now all's ruin'd again.

[*Aside.*

Bell. [*Peeping.*] Damn'd Chance ! If I had gone a whoring with the *Practlice of Piety* in my Pocket, I had never been discover'd.

Fond. Adultery, and innocent ! O Lord ! Here's Doctrine ! Ay, here's Discipline !

Lat. Dear Husband, I'm amaz'd : — Sure it is a good Book, and only tends to the Speculation of Sin.

Fond. Speculation ! No, no ; something went farther than speculation when I was not to be let in — Where is this Apocryphal Elder ? I'll ferret him.

Lat. I'm so distracted, I can't think of a Lye.

[*Aside.*

Fondlewife haling out Bellmour.

Fond. Come out here, thou *Ananias* incarnate — Who, how now ! who have we here ?

Lat.

Lat. Ha!

[Shrieks, as surpriz'd.

Fond. Oh, thou salacious Woman! Am I then brutified? Ay, I feel it here; I sprout, I bud, I blossom, I am ripe-horn-mad. But who in the Devil's name, are you? Mercy on me for swearing. But——

Lat. Oh, goodness keep us! Who's this? Who are you? What are you?

Bell. Soh.

Lat. In the name of the—— Oh! Good, my Dear, don't come near it, I'm afraid 'tis the Devil; indeed it has hoofs, Dear.

Fond. Indeed, and I have Horns, Dear. The Devil, no, I'm afraid, 'tis the Flesh, thou Harlot. Dear, with the Pox. Come Syren, speak, confess, who is this Reverend, brawny Pastor?

Lat. Indeed, and indeed now my dear Nykin—I never saw this wicked Man before.

Fond. Oh, it is a Man then, it seems.

Lat. Rather, sure it is a Wolf in the cloathing of a Sheep.

Fond. Thou art a Devil in his proper cloathing, Woman's flesh. What, you know nothing of him, but his Fleece here! — You don't love Mutton? — you *Magdalen* unconverted.

Bell. Well, now I know my Cue — That is very honourably, to excuse her, and very impudently accuse my self.

[Aside.

Lat. Why then, I wish I may never enter into the Heaven of your Embraces again, my Dear, if ever I saw his face before.

Fond. O Lord! O strange! I am in admiration of your impudence. Look at him a little better; he is more modest, I warrant you; than to deny it. Come, were you two never face to face before? Speak.

Bell. Since all Artifice is vain — And I think my self

self obliged to speak the Truth in Justice to your Wife — No.

Fond. Humph.

Let. No, indeed Dear.

Fond. Nay I find you are both in a story; that I must confess. But, what — not to be cured of the Cholick? Don't you know your Patient, Mrs. Quack? Oh, lie upon your Stomach; lying upon your Stomach will cure you of the Cholick. Ah! I wish he has lain upon no bodie's stomach but his own. Answer me that, *Jezebel*?

Let. Let the wicked Man answer for himself; does he think that I have nothing to do but excuse him; 'tis enough, if I can clear my own innocence to my own Dear.

Bell. By my troth, and so 'tis — I have been a little too backward, that's the truth on't.

Fond. Come, Sir, who are you, in the first place? and what are you?

Bell. A Whoremaster.

Fond. Very Concise.

Let. O beastly, impudent Creature!

Fond. Well Sir, and what came you hither for?

Bell. To lie with your Wife.

Fond. Good again --- A very civil Person this, and I believe speaks truth.

Let. Oh, insupportable impudence!

Fond. Well, Sir, --- Pray be cover'd --- and you have --- Heh! You have finish'd the matter, Heh? And I am, as I should be, a sort of a civil Perquisite to a Whore-master, called a *Cuckold*, Heh? Is it not so? Come, I'm inclining to believe every word you say.

Bell. Why, Faith I must confess, so I design'd you --- But, you were a little unlucky in coming so soon, and hindred the making of your own Fortune.

Fond.

The Old Batchelour.

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Fond. Humph. Nay, if you mince the matter once, and go back of your word; you are not the Person I took you for. Come, come, go on boldly --- What, don't be asham'd of your Profession --- Confess, confess, I shall love thee the better for't --- I shall, I feck --- What, dost think I don't know how to behave my self in the employment of a Cuckold, and have been three Years Apprentice to Matrimony? Come, come, Plain-dealing is a Jewel.

Bell. Well, since I see thou art a good honest Fellow, I'll confess the whole matter to thee.

Fond. Oh, I am a very honest Fellow --- You never lay with an honest man's wife in your life.

Lat. How my heart akes! All my comfort lies in his impudence, and Heav'n be praised, he has a considerable portion. [*Aside.*

Bell. In short then, I was informed of the opportunity of your absence, by my Spy, (for faith, honest *Isaac* I have a long time design'd thee this favour) I knew *Spin-text* was to come by your direction. --- But I laid a trap for him, and procured his Habit; in which, I pass'd upon your Servants, and was conducted hither. I pretended a Fit of the Cholick, to excuse my lying down upon your Bed; hoping that when she heard of it, her good nature would bring her to administer Remedies for my Distemper. --- You know what might have follow'd. --- But like an uncivil Person, you knock'd at the door, before your wife, was come to me.

Fond. Ha! This is Apocryphal; I may chuse whether I will believe it or no.

Bell. That you may, faith; and I hope you won't believe a word on't --- But I can't help telling the truth, for my life.

Fond. How! wou'd not you have me believe you, say you?

Bell.

Bell. No; for then you must of consequence part with your wife; and there will be some hopes of having her upon the publick: then the encouragement of a separate maintenance —

Fond. No, no; for that matter, — when she and I part, she'll carry her separate maintenance about her.

Lat. Ah, cruel Dear, how can you be so barbarous? You'll break my heart, if you talk of parting. [Cries.

Fond. Ah, Dissembling Vermin!

Bell. How canst thou be so cruel, *Isaac*? Thou hast the heart of a Mountain-Tyger. By the faith of a sincere Sinner, she's innocent for me. Go to him, Madam, fling your snowy Arms about his stubborn Neck; bathe his relentless Face in your salt trickling Tears. — So; a few soft Words, and a Kiss, and the good Man melts. See how kind Nature works, and boils over in him. *She goes and hangs upon his Neck, and kisses him. Bell. kisses her Hand behind Fondlewife's back.*

Lat. Indeed, my Dear, I was but just come down stairs, when you knock'd at the Door; and the Maid told me Mr. Spin-text was ill of the Cholick, upon our Bed. And won't you speak to me, cruel *Nykin*? Indeed I'll die, if you don't.

Fond. Ah! No, no, I cannot speak, my heart's so full — I have been a tender Husband, a tender Yoke-fellow; you know I have — But thou hast been a faithless *Dalilah*, and the *Philistines*, have been upon thee. Heh! Art thou not vile and unclean, Heh? Speak. [Weeping.

Lat. Noh. [Sighing.

Fond. Oh, that I could believe thee!

Lat. Oh, my Heart will break. [Seeming to faint.

Fond. Heh, How! No, stay, stay, I will believe thee, I will — Pray bend her forward, Sir.

Lat.

Lat. Oh ! Oh ! Where is my Dear ?

Fond. Here, here ; I do believe thee. — I won't believe my own Eyes.

Bell. For my part , I am so charm'd with the love of your Turtle to you , that I'll go and sollicit Matrimony with all my might and main.

Fond. Well , well ; Sir ; as long as I believe it , 'tis well enough . No thanks to you , Sir , for her Vertue. — But , I'll show you the way out of my House , if you please. Come , my Dear. Nay , I will believe thee , I do , I feck.

Bell. See the great Blessing of an easie Faith ; Opinion cannot err.

No Husband , by his Wife , can be deceiv'd ;
She still is Vertuous , if she's so believ'd.

[*Exeunt.*]



A C T. V.

S C E N E I. *The Street.*

Enter Bellmour in Fanatick Habit , and Setter.

Bellmour.

Enter ! Well encounter'd.

Setter. Joy of your Return , Sir. Have you made a good Voyage ? Or have you brought your own Lading back ?

Bell. No , I have brought nothing but Ballast back — made a delicious Voyage *Setter* ; and might have

have rode at Ancor in the Port till this time, but the ennemy surpriz'd us — I would unrig.

Setter. I attend you, Sir.

[*Heartwell and Lucy appear at Sylvia's Door*]

Bell. Ha! Is not that *Heartwell* at *Sylvia's Door*? Be gone quickly, I'll follow you: — I would not be known [*Exit Setter.*] Pox take 'em they stand just in my way.

Heart. I'm impatient till it done.

Lucy. That may be, without troubling your self to go again for your Brother's Chaplain. Don't you see that stalking Form of Godliness?

Heart. O Pox; he's a Fanatick.

Lucy. An Executioner qualified to do your business. He has been lawfully Ordain'd.

Heart. I'll pay him well, if you'll break the Matter to him.

Lucy. I warrant you — Do you go and prepare your Bride. [*Ex. Heartw.*]

Bell. Humph, Sits the Wind there? — What a lucky Rogue am I! Oh, what Sport will be here, if I can persuade this Wench to Secresie?

Lucy. Sir: Reverend Sir.

Bell. Madam.

[*Discovers himself.*]

Lucy. Now, Goodness have Mercy upon me! Mr. *Bellmour*! is it you?

Bell. Even — What dost think?

Lucy. Think! That I should not believe my Eyes, and that you are not what you seem to be.

Bell. True. But to convince thee who I am, thou know'st my old Token. [*Kisses her*]

Lucy. Nay, Mr. *Bellmour*: O Lard! I believe you are a Parson in good earnest, you kifs so devoutly.

Bell. Well, your business with me, *Lucy*?

Lucy. I had none, but through mistake.

Bell

Bell. Which mistake you must go thorough with, *Lucy* — Come, I know the intrigue between *Heartwell* and your Mistress; and you mistook me for *Tribulation Spintext*, to marry 'em. — Ha? Are not matters in this posture? — Confess. — Come, I'll be faithful: I will I-faith. — What Diffide in me, *Lucy*?

Lucy. Alas a day You and Mr. *Vainlove*, between you, have ruin'd my poor Mistress: You have made a Gap in her Reputation; And can you blame her if she stop it up with a Husband?

Bell. Well, is it as I say?

Lucy. Well, It is then: But you'll be secret?

Bell. Phuh, Secret, ay — And to be out of thy debt, I'll trust thee with another Secret. Your Mistress must not marry *Heartwell*, *Lucy*.

Lucy. How! O Lord! —

Bell. Nay, don't be in Passion, *Lucy*: — I'll provide a fitter Husband for her. — Come, here's Earnest of my good intentions for thee too: Let this mollifie. — [*Gives her Money.*] Look you, *Heartwell* is my Friend; and tho he be blind, I must not see him fall into the Snare, and unwittingly marry a Whore.

Lucy. Whore! I'd have you know, my Mistress scorns —

Bell. Nay, nay: Look you, *Lucy*; there are Whores of as good Quality. — But to the purpose, if you will give me leave to acquaint you with it.

— Do you carry on the mistake of me: I'll marry 'em. — Nay, don't pause: If you do, I'll spoil all. — I have some private Reasons for what I do, which I'll tell you within. — In the mean time, I promise, --- and rely upon me, --- to help your Mistress to a Husband: Nay, and thee too, *Lucy*. — Here's my hand, I will; with a fresh Assurance.

[*Gives her more Money.*

F *Lucy,*

Lucy. Ah the Devil is not so cunning. --- You know my easie Nature. --- Well, for once I'll venture to serve you; but if you do deceive me, the Curse of all kind, tender-hearted women light upon you.

Bell. 'That's as much as to say, *The Pox take me.*
--- Well, lead on [*Exeunt.*]

Enter Vain-love, Sharper and Setter.

Sharp. Just now, say you, gone in with *Lucy*?

Sett. I saw him, Sir; and stood at the Corner where you found me, and over-heard all they said. *Mr. Bellmour* is to marry 'em.

Sharp. Ha, ha, 'Twill be a pleasant Cheat. --- I'll plague *Heartwell* when I see him. Prithee, *Frank*, let's teaze him; make him fret till he foam at the Mouth, and disgorge his Matrimonial Oath with Interest--- Come, thou'rt so musty---

Setter. To *Sharper.*] Sir, a word with you.

[*Whispers him.*]

Vain. *Sharper* swears, she has forsworn the Letter --- I'm sure he tells me Truth; --- but I am not sure she told him Truth: --- Yet she was unaffectedly concern'd, he says; and often blush'd with Anger and Surprize: --- And so I remember in the Park. --- She had reason, if I wrong her. --- I begin to doubt,

Sharp. Say'st thou so!

Sett. This Afternoon, Sir, about an Hour before my Master received the Letter.

Sharp. In my Conscience, like enough.

Sett. Ay, I know her, Sir; at least; I'm sure I can fish it out of her. She's the very Sluce to her Lady's Secrets: --- 'Tis but setting her Mill a going, and I can drein her of 'em all.

Sharp. Here, *Frank*, your Blood-hound has made

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out the Fault : This Letter , that so sticks in thy Maw , is counterfeit ; only a Trick of *Silvia* , in Revenge , contriv'd by *Lucy*.

Vain. Ha ! it has a Colour --- But how do you know it , Sirrah ?

Setter. I do suspect as much --- because why , Sir She was pumping me about how your Worship's Affairs stood towards Madam *Araminta*. As , when you had seen her last , when you were to see her next ; and , where you were to be found at that time : And such like.

Vain. And where did you tell her ?

Setter. In the *Piazza*.

Vain. There I receiv'd the Letter --- It must be so --- And why did you not find me out , to tell me this before , Sir ?

Sharp. You were well employ'd --- I think there is no objection to the Excuse.

Vain. Pox o' my sawcy Credulity --- If I have lost her I deserve it. But if Confession and Repentance be of force , I'll win her , or weary her into a Forgiveness.

[Exit.

Sharp. Methinks I long to see *Bellmour* come forth.

Enter Bellmour.

Setter. Talk of the Devil --- See where he comes.

Sharp. Hugging himself in his prosperous Mischief --- No real Fanatick can look better pleas'd after a successful Sermon of Sedition.

Bell. Sharper ! Fortifie thy Spleen : Such a Jest ! speak when thou art ready.

Sharp. Now , were I ill natur'd , would I utter-disappoint thy Mirth : Hear thee tell thy mighty self , with as much Gravity as a Bishop hears Venerable Causes in the Spiritual Court : Not so much wrinkle my Face with one Smile ; but let thee

look simply, and laugh by thy self.

Bell. Plhaw, No: I have a better Opinion of thy Wit—Gad, I defie thee—

Sharp. Were it not loss of time, you should make the experiment. But honest *Setter* here, over-heard you with *Lucy*, and has told me all.

Bell. Nay, then I thank thee for not putting me out of Countenance. But, to tell you something you don't know—I got an Opportunity, after I had married 'em, of discovering the Cheat to *Sylvia*. She took it at first, as another Woman would the like Disappointment; but my Promise to make her amends quickly with another Husband, somewhat pacify'd her.

Sharp. But how the devil do you think to acquit your self of your Promise? Will you marry her you self?

Bell. I have no such intentions at present --- Prithee, wilt thou think a little for me? I am sure the ingenious Mr. *Setter* will assist.

Setter. O Lord, Sir!

Bell. I'll leave him with you, and go shift my Habit.

[Exit.]

Enter Sir Joseph and Bluffe.

Sharp. Heh! Sure, Fortune has sent this Fool hither on purpose. *Setter* stand close; seem not to observe'em; and, Hark-ye.

[whispers.]

Bluffe. Fear him not --- I am prepar'd for him now; and he shall find he might have safer rous'd a sleeping Lion.

Sir Jo. Hush, hush: Don't you see him?

Bluffe. Shew him to me. Where is he?

Sir Jo. Nay don't speak so loud --- I don't jest as I did a little while ago --- Look yonder --- A-gad if he should hear the Lion roar, he'd cudgel him into an Ass, and his primitive Braying. Don't you

you remember the Story in *Aesop's Fables*, Bully? A Gad there are good Morals to be pickt out of *Aesop's Fables*, let me tell you that; and *Reynard the Fox* too.

Bluffe. Damn your Morals.

Sir 70. Prithce, don't speak so loud.

Bluffe. Damn your Morals: I must revenge th' Affront done to my Honour. [*In a low Voice.*

Sir 70. Ay; do, do, Captain, if you think fitting — You may dispose of your own Flesh as you think fitting, d'ye see: — But by the Lord Harry, I'll leave you. [*Stealing away upon his Tiptoes*

Bluffe. Prodigious! What, will you forsake your Friend in his extremity! You can't, in honour, refuse to carry him a Challenge.

[*Almost whispering, and treading softly after him.*

Sir 70. Prithce, What do you see in my face, that looks as if I would carry a Challenge? Honour, is your Province, Captain: Take it--- All the World knows me to be a Knight, and a Man of Worship.

Setter. I warrant you, Sir, I'm instructed.

Sharp. Impossible! *Araminta* take a liking to a Fool! [*Aloud.*

Setter. Her head runs on nothing else, nor she can talk of nothing else.

Sharp. I know she commended him all the while we were in the Park; but I thought it had been only to make *Vainlove* jealous.---

Sir 70. How's this! Good Bully, hold your breath, and let's hearken. A-gad, this must be I.---

Sharp. Death, it can't be! --- An Oaf, an Ideot, Wittal!

Sir 70. Ay, now it's out; 'tis I, my own individual Person.

Sharp. A wretch, that has flown for shelter to the

the lowest shrub of mankind, and seeks protection from a blasted Coward.

Sir Jos. That's you, *Bully*, Back.

[*Bluffe frowns upon Sir Jos.*

Sharp. She has given *Vain-love* her Promise, to marry him before to morrow morning. -- Has she not?

[*To Setter.*

Setter. She has, Sir; -- And I have it in Charge to attend her all this Evening in order to conduct her to the Place appointed.

Sharp. Well, I'll go and inform your Master; and do you press her to make all the haste imaginable.

[*Exit.*

Setter. Were I a Rogue now, whata noble Prize could I dispose of! A goodly Pinnace, richly laden, and to launch forth under my Auspicious Convoy. Twelve thousand pounds, and all her Rigging; besides what lies conceal'd under Hatches. --- Ha! All this committed to my care! --- Avaunt Temptation -- Setter, shew thy self a Person of worth; be true to thy Trust, and be reputed honest. Reputed honest! Hum: Is that all? Ay: For to be honest is nothing; the reputation of it is all. Reputation! what have such poor Rogues as I to do with Reputation? -- Reputation is e'en as foolish as Honesty. And for my part, if I meet Sir Joseph with a Purse of Gold in his hand, I'll dispose of mine to the best advantage.

Sir Jo. Heh, heh, heh: Here this for you i' Faith Mr. Setter. Nay I'll take you at your word

[*Thinking a Purse*

Setter. Sir Joseph and the Captain too! undone, undone! I'm undone, my Master's undone.

Sir Jo. No, no; never fear Man, the Lady business shall be done. What -- Come, Mr. Setter, I have over-heard all, and to speak, is but loss of time; but if there be occasion, let the

word

worthy Gentlemen intercede for me.

[Gives him Gold.

Setter. O Lord, Sir, what d'ye mean? Corrupt my honesty! — They have indeed, very perswading faces. But —

Sir Jos. 'Tis too little, there's more, Man. There, take all --- Now ---

Setter. Well, Sir Joseph, you have such a winning way with you! —

Sir Jo. And how, and how, good Setter, did the little Rogue look, when she talk'd of Sir Joseph? Did not her Eyes twinkle, and her Mouth water? Did not she pull up her little Bubbies? And — Agad, I'm so overjoy'd — And stroke down her Belly; and then step aside to tie her Garter, when she was thinking of her Love? Hch, Setter.

Setter. Oh, Yes, Sir.

Sir Jo. How now, Bully? What, melancholy because I'm in the Ladies favour? — No matter, I'll make your peace — I know, they were a little smart upon you — But I warrant, I'll bring you into the Ladies good Graces.

Bluffe. Plhaw, I have Petitions to show, from other-guefs-toys than she. Look here: These were sent me this Morning — There, read, [Shows Letters.] That — That's a Scrawl of Quality. Here, here's from a Countess too. Hum — No hold — That's from a Knight's Wife, she sent it me by her Husband — But here, both these are from Persons of great Quality.

Sir Jo. They are either from Persons of great Quality, or no Quality } While Sir Joseph reads, Bluffe at all, 'tis such a Damn'd ugly Hand. } whispers Setter.

Setter. Captain, I would do any thing to serve you; but this is so difficult —

Bluffe. Not at all. Don't I know him?

Setter. You'll remember the Conditions? —

Bluffe. I'll give't you under my Hand — In the mean time , here's Earnest. [*Gives him Money*] Come , Knight ; — I'm capitulating with Mr. *Setter* for you.

Sir *To.* Ah , honest *Setter.* — Sirrah , I'll give thee any thing but a Night's Lodging. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter Sharper , tugging in Heartwell.

Sharp. Nay , prithee , leave Railing , and come along with me : May be she mayn't be within. 'Tis but to yond' Corner house.

Heart. Whither ? Whither ? Which Corner-house ?

Sharp. Why , there : The Two white Posts,

Heart. And who would you visit there , say you ? Oons , how my Heart akes.

Sharp. Pshaw , Thou'rt so troublesome and inquisitive — Why , I'll tell you : 'Tis a young Creature that *Vainlove* debauch'd , and has forsaken. Did you never hear *Bellmour* chide him about *Sylvia*.

Heart. Death , and Hell , and Marriage ! My Wife ! [*Aside.*]

Sharp. Why , thou art as musty as a New-married Man , that had found his Wife Knowing the first Night.

Heart. Hell , and the Devil ! Does he know it ? But , hold : — If he should not , I were a Fool to discover it — I'll dissemble and try him [*Aside*] Ha , ha , ha. Why , *Tom* ; Is that such an Occasion of Melancholy ? Is it such an uncommon mischief ?

Sharp. No , Faith ; I believe not — Few Women , but have their Year of Probation , before they are cloistered in the narrow Joys of Wedlock. But prithee come along with me , or I'll go and have the Lady to my self. B'w'y' George. [*Going.*]

Heart.

Heart. O Torture ! How he racks and tears me ! — Death ! Shall I own my Shame , or wittingly let him go and whore my Wife ? No , that's insupportable — Oh , *Sharper.*

Sharp. How now ?

Heart. Oh , I am — married.

Sharp. Now hold Spleen. Married !

Heart. Certainly , irrecoverably married.

Sharp. Heav'n forbid , Man. How long ?

Heart. Oh , an Age , an Age : I have been married these two Hours.

Sharp. My old Batchelour married ! That were a Jest. Ha , ha , ha.

Heart. Death : D'ye mock me ? Heark-ye : If either you esteem my Friendship , or your own Safety --- come not near that House --- that Corner-house --- that hot Brothel. Ask no Questions [*Exit.*

Sharp. Mad , by this Light.

Thus Grief still treads upon the Heels of Pleasure :
Marry'd in haste , we may repent at leisure.

Setter Entying.

Setter. Some by Experience find those Words misplac'd :

At leisure marry'd , they repent in haste.

As I suppose my Master *Heartwell.*

Sharp. Here , again , my *Mercury* !

Setter. Sublimate , if you please , Sir : I think my Achievements do deserve the Epithet --- *Mercury* was a Pimp too ; but , tho I blush to own it at this time , I must confess I am somewhat fall'n from the Dignity of my Function ; and do condescend to be scandalously employ'd in the Promotion of Vulgar Marrimony.

Sharp. As how , dear dexterous Pimp ?

Sett. Why, to be brief, for I have weighty Affairs depending: — Our Stratagem succeeded as intended — *Bluffe* turns arrand Traytor; bribes me to make a private Conveyance of the Lady to him, and put a Sham settlement upon Sir *Joseph*.

Sharp. O Rogue! Well, but I hope —

Sett. No, no; never fear me, Sir — I privately inform'd the Knight of the Treachery; who has agreed, seemingly to be cheated, that the Captain may be so in reality.

Sharp. Where's the Bride?

Sett. Shifting Cloaths for the purpose at a Friend's House of mine. Here's Company coming, if you'll walk this way, Sir, I'll tell you. [Exeunt.]

Enter Bellmour, Belinda, Araminta and Vainlove.

Vain. Oh, 'twas Frenzy all: Cannot you forgive it? — Men in Madness have a Title to your Pity. [To Araminta.]

Aram. — Which they forfeit when they are restor'd to their Senses.

Vain. I am not presuming beyond a Pardon.

Aram. You who cou'd reproach me with one Counterfeit, how insolent wou'd a real pardon make you? But there's no need to forgive what is not worth my Anger.

Belin. O my Conscience, I cou'd find in my Heart to marry thee, purely to be rid of thee. — At least, Thou art so troublesome a Lover, there's Hope thou'l't make a more than ordinary quiet Husband. [To Bellmour.]

Bell. Say you so? — Is that a Maxim among ye?

Belin. Yes: You fluttering Men of the Mode have made Marriage a meer French Dish.

Bell. I hope there's no French Sawce. [Aside.]

Belin.

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Belin. You are so curious in the Preparation, that is, your Courtship, one wou'd think you meant a noble Entertainment: — But when we come to feed, 'tis all Froth, and poor, but in show. Nay, often, only Remains, which have been, I know nothow many times, warm'd for other Company, and at last serv'd up cold to the Wife.

Bell. That were a miserable Wretch indeed, who cou'd not afford one warm Dish for the Wife of his bosom — But you timorous Virgins, form a dreadful Chimæra of a Husband, as of a Creature contrary to that soft, humble, pliant, easie thing, a Lover; so guess at Plagues in Marrimony, in Opposition to the Pleasures of Courtship. Alas Courtship to Marriage, is but as the Musick in the Playhouse, till the Curtain's drawn; but that once up, then opens the Scene of Pleasure.

Belin. Oh, foh — no: Rather, Courtship to Marriage, is as a very witty Prologue to a very dull Play.

Enter Sharper.

Sharp. Hift, — *Bellmour:* If you'll bring the Ladies, make haste to *Silvia's* Lodgings, before *Heartwell* has fretted himself out of breath. — I'm in hast now, but I'll come in at the Catastrophe.

[Exit.

Bell. You have an Opportunity now, Madam, to revenge your self upon *Heartwell*, for affronting your Squirrel.

[To *Belinda*

Belin. O the filthy rude Beast.

Aram. 'Tis a lasting Quarrel: I think he has never been at our House since.

Bell. But give your selves the trouble to walk to that Corner-House, and I'll tell you by the way what may divert and surprise you.

[Exeunt.

SCENE

SCENE *Changes to Silvia's Lodgings.**Enter Heartwell and Boy.**Heart.* Gone forth, say you, with her Maid?*Boy.* There was a Man too that fetch'd 'em out:
— *Settler*, I think they call'd him.*Heart.* So-h, — That precious Pimp too. —
Damn'd, damn'd Strumpet! Cou'd she not contain
her self on her Wedding-Day! Not hold out till
Night! Leave me. [Exit Boy.]O cursed State! How wide we err, when apprehen-
sive of the Load of Life, — We hope to find
That Help which Nature meant in Woman kind,
To Man that Supplemental Self design'd:
But proves a burning Caustick when apply'd;
And *Adam*, sure, cou'd with more Ease abide
The Bone when broken, than when made a Bride.*Enter Bellmour, Belinda, Vainlove, Araminta.**Bell.* Now *George*, What Rhyming! I thought
the Chimes of Verse were past, when once the dolo-
ful Marriage knell was rung.*Heart.* Shame and Confusion. I am exposed.[Vainlove and Araminta talk a-part.]*Belin.* Joy, Joy Mr. *Bride-groom*; I give you Joy
Sir.*Heart.* 'Tis not in thy Nature to give me Joy —
A Woman can as soon give Immortality.*Belin.* Ha, ha, ha, O Gad, Men grow such
Clowns when they are married.*Bell.* That they are fit for no Company but their
Wives.*Belin.* Nor for them neither, in a little time —
I swear, at the month's end, you shall hardly find a
Mar-

Married-man, that will do a civil thing to his Wife, or say a civil thing to any body else. *Jesu!* how he looks already. Ha, ha, ha!

Bell. Ha, ha, ha.

Hear. Death, am I made your Laughing-stock? For you, Sir, I shall find a time; but take off your Wasp here, or the Clown may grow boistrous, I have a Fly-flap.

Belin. You have occasion for't, your Wife has been blown upon.

Bell. That's home.

Heart. Not Fiends or Furies could have added to my vexation, or any thing, but another Woman. — You've wrack'd my patience; be gone, or By —

Bell. Hold, Hold. What the Devil, thou wilt not draw upon a Woman?

Vain. What's the matter?

Aram. Bless me! What have you done to him?

Belin. Only touch'd a gall'd beast till he winch'd.

Vain. *Bellmour*, Give it over; you vex him too much; 'tis all serious to him.

Belin. Nay, I swear, I begin to pity him, my self.

Heart. Damn your pity. — But let me be calm a little — How have I deserv'd this of you? Any of ye? Sir, have I impair'd the Honour of your House? promis'd your Sister Matriage, and whor'd her? Wherein have I injured you? Did I bring a Physician to your Father when he lay expiring, and endeavour to prolong his life, and you one-and-twenty? Madam, have I had an Opportunity with you and bauk'd it? Did you ever offer me the Favour that I refus'd it? Or —

Belin. Oh fo! What does the filthy fellow mean? Lard, let me be gone.

Aram. Hang me, if I pity you? you are right enough serv'd.

Bell.

Bell. This is a little scurrilous tho'.

Vain. Nay, 'tis a Sort of your own scratching.
— Well George.

Heart. You are the principal Cause of all my present ills. If *Sylvia* had not been your Whore, my Wife might have been honest.

Vain. And if *Sylvia* had not been your Wife, my Whore might have been just. — There, we are even.
— But have a good heart, I heard of your Misfortune, and come to your relief.

Heart. When Execution's over, you offer a Reprieve.

Vain. What would you give?

Heart. Oh! Any thing, every thing, a Leg or two, or an Arm; nay, I would be divorced from my Virility, to be divorced from my Wife.

Enter Sharper

Vain. Faith, that's a sure way. — But here's one can sell you freedom better cheap.

Sharp. *Vain-love*, I have been a kind of a God-father to you, yonder. I have promised and vow'd some things in your Name, which I think you are bound to perform.

Vain. No signing to a Blank, friend.

Sharp. No, I'll deal fairly with you. — 'Tis a full and free Discharge to Sir *Joseph Wittal* and *Captain Bluffe*; for all Injuries whatsoever, done unto you by them, until the present Date hereof.

— How say you?

Vain. Agreed.

Sharp. Then, let me beg these Ladies to wear their Masques, a moment. [Exit.

Heart. What the Devil's all this to me?

Vain. Patience.

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Re-Enter *Sharper*, with *Sir Joseph*, *Bluffe*, *Sylvia*,
Lucy, *Setter*.

Bluffe. All Injuries whatsoever, *Mr. Sharper*?

Sir Jos. Ay, ay, whatsoever, *Captain*; stick to that; whatsoever!

Sharp. 'Tis done, those Gentlemen are witnesses to the general Release.

Vain. Ay, ay, to this instant Moment. — I have past an Act of Oblivion.

Bluffe. 'Tis very generous, *Sir*, since I needs must own —

Sir Jos. No, no, *Captain*, you need not own, Heh, heh, heh. 'Tis I must own —

Bluffe. — That you are over-reach'd too ha, ha, ha, only a little Art military used — only undermined, or so, as shall appear by the fair *Araminta*, my Wife's permission. Oh, the Devil, cheated at last! [*Lucy unmasks*.]

Sir Jos. Only a little Art-military Trick, *Captain*, only countermin'd, or so — *Mr. Vain-love*, I suppose you know whom I have got — now? but all's forgiven.

Vain. I know whom you have not got; pray Ladies convince him. [*Aram. and Belin. unmask*]

Sir Jos. Ah! O Lord, my heart akes. — Ah! *Setter*, a Rogue of all sides.

Sharp. *Sir Joseph* you had better have pre-engag'd this Gentleman's Pardon: For though *Vain-love* be so generous to forgive the loss of his Mistress. — I know not how *Heartwell* may take the loss of his Wife. [*Sylvia unmasks*.]

Heart. My Wife! By this Light 'tis she, the very Cockatrice — Oh *Sharper*! Let me embrace thee. — But art thou sure she is really married to him?

Setter. Really and lawfully married, I am witness.
Sharp.

Sharp. Bellmour will unriddle to you.

[*Heartwell goes to Bellmour.*]

Sir Jo. Pray, Madam, who are you? For I find, you and I are like to be better acquainted.

Silv. The worst of me, is that I am your Wife---

Sharp. Come, Sir *Joseph*, your Fortune is not so bad as you fear. — A fine Lady, and a Lady of very good Quality.

Sir Jo. Thanks to my Knight-hood, she's a Lady---

Vain. --- That deserves a Fool with a better Title. --- Pray use her as my Relation, or you shall hear on't.

Bluff. What, are you a woman of Quality too, Spouse?

Setter. And my Relation; pray let her be respected accordingly. --- Well, honest *Lucy*, Fare thee well --- I think, you and I have been Play-fellows off and on, any time this Seven Years.

Lucy. Hold your prating. --- I'm thinking what Vocation I shall follow while my Spouse is planting Lawrels in the Wars.

Bluff. No more Wars, Spouse, no more Wars. While I plant Lawrels for my Head abroad, I may find the branches sprout at home.

Heart. Bellmour, I approve thy mirth, and thank thee. --- And I cannot in gratitude (for I see which way thou art going) see thee fall into the same snare, out of which thou hast deliver'd me.

Bell. I thank thee, *George*, for thy good intention. --- But there is a fatality in Marriage. --- For I find I'm resolute.

Heart. Then good Council will be thrown away upon you. --- For my part, I have once escap'd. And when I wed again, may she be --- Ugly as an old Bawd.

Vain. --- Ill natur'd, as an old Maid, ---

Bell. Wanton as a young Widow, —

Sharp. And jealous as a barren Wife.

Heart. Agreed.

Bell. Well, 'midst of these dreadful Denunciations, and notwithstanding the Warning and Example before me, I commit my self to lasting Durance.

Belin. Prisoner, make much of your Fetters.'

[*Giving her Hand.*

Bell. Frank, Will you keep us in Countenance?

Vain. May I presume to hope so great a Blessing?

Aram. We had better take the Advantage of a little of our Friends Experience first.

Bell. O my Conscience she dares not consent, for fear he shou'd recant. [*Aside.*] Well, we shall have your Company to Church in the Morning: — May be it may get you an Appetite to see us fall to before ye. *Setter*, did not you tell me? —

Setter. They're at the Door: I'll call 'em in.

A Dance.

Bell. Now set we forward on a Journey for life: — Come take your Fellow Travellers. Old George, I'm sorry to see thee still plod on alone.

Heart.

With gaudy Plumes and gingling Bells made proud,

The youthful Beast sets forth, and neighs aloud.

Morning-Sun his Tinsell'd Harnefs gilds.

And the first Stage a Down-hill Green-sword yields.
Oh —

What rugged ways attend the Noon of Life!
 Our Sun declines, and with what anxious Strife,
 What pain we tug that galling Load, a Wife.
 All Conquers the first Heat with vigour run;
 But 'tis with Whip and Spur the Race is won.

[*Exeunt Omnes.*]

F I N I S.



EPILOGUE.

AS a rash Girl, who will all Hazards ran,
And be enjoy'd, tho sure to be undone;
Soon as her Curiosity is over,
Would give the World she could her Toy recover:
So fares it with our Poet; and I'm sent
To tell you, he already does repent: }
Would you were all as forward, to keep Lent.
Now the Deed's done, the Giddy-thing has leisure
To think o'th' Sting, that's in the tail of Pleasure.
Methinks I hear him in Consideration! }
What will the World say? Where's my Reputation?
Now that's at stake. -- No fool, 'tis out o' fashion. }
If loss of that should follow want of Wit,
How many Undone Men were in the Pit!
Why that's some Comfort, to an Authors fears;
If he's an Ass, he will be Try'd by's Peers.
But hold --- I am exceeding my Commission;
My Business here, was humbly to Petition:
But we're so us'd to rail on these Occasions,
I could not help one tryal of your Patience.
For 'tis our way, you know, for fear o'th' worst,
To be before-hand still, and cry Fool first.
How say you, Sparks? How do you stand affected?
I swear, young Bays within, is so dejected,
'Twould grieve your hearts to see him: Shall I call him?
But then you cruel Criticks would so maul him!
Yet, maybe, you'll encourage a beginner;
But how? --- Just as the Devil does a Sinner.
Women and Wits are us'd e'en much at one,
You gain your Ends, and damn 'em when you've done.

F I N I S.

